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THURSDAY, MAY 6TH, 2010

All eyes on a crucial marginal seat...

Vale voters hold the key to No.10

by PHILIP IRWIN

VOTERS in the Vale will be having their say via the ballot box today after a month of hectic campaigning – at least on TV, newspapers and the internet.

As usual, there has been no shortage of advice and confident prediction, but the pollsters have a far from 100 per cent record when it comes to gauging the public mood.

National newspapers have endorsed one party or another, or have urged tactical voting in various forms, but just how much notice will the electorate take?

When it comes to the crunch, the public will decide.

The Vale constituency has always been a key marginal, with Labour defending a slim majority of 1,808 over the Conservatives (19,481 to 17,673).

In the eyes of many, it is a two-horse race – although the Lib-Dems, who polled more than 6,000 votes at the last general election, might bridle at that suggestion.

As the campaign has developed, it appears that the Vale is in the category of an absolute 'must' for the Conservatives.

To fail in the Vale, it would seem, could be the death knell for David Cameron's hopes.

The Vale has seven candidates standing for election, and they are (alphabetically) as follows:

***Alun Cairns** – Conservative*
***Alana Davies** – Labour*
***John Harrold** – Christian Party*
***Ian Johnson** – Plaid Cymru*
***Kevin Mahoney** – UK Independence Party*
***Eluned Parrott** – Liberal Democrats*
***Rhodri Thomas** – Green Party.*

Across the Vale, a total of 81 polling stations will be open from 7am until 10pm in venues such as schools, community centres, portacabins and village halls.

A Vale Council spokeswoman said: "You don't need your polling card to be able to vote. As long as you're listed on the electoral register, then all you need to do is turn up at your local polling station on the day.

"A full list of polling stations is available on the council's website *www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/our_council/council/voting/general_election_-_6_may.aspx*"

Four schools in the Vale will be closed because they are being used as polling stations. These are: *Jenner Park Primary; Gladstone Road Primary; Ysgol Maes Dyfan; and Dinas Powys Infants.*

Five other schools will also be polling stations but, because there is separate access, they will remain open.

These are: *St Nicholas C/W Primary; Llanulltid Fawr Primary; Eagleswell Primary; Llanfair Primary; and Holton Road Primary (entry via Pyke Street).*

Alice 'holds court' at Bella Vista on her 100th birthday!

LEFT:
Alice Taylor celebrating her 100th birthday with carer Gemma O'Donovan.

Report by TIM CHAPMAN

ON Saturday, May 1, the Bella Vista Nursing Home on Tynewydd Road, Barry had a memorable celebration – a birthday party for 100-year-old Alice Taylor.

Relatives, residents and staff all gathered to mark the very special occasion.

When Alice was born, Herbert Henry Asquith was the Liberal Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the First World War was still years off!

Alice told The GEM: "I was originally from Shropshire, but came to Barry at a young age just after the First World War.

"My father had already come down to south Wales – he was in the Army – and I can still remember the day when we travelled to meet him."

The remainder of Alice's life has been spent in the town.

"I worked as a maid and a cook in service for the timber merchant JC Meggit.

"The best thing in my life was my husband John, who was called Johnnie.

"He was a lovely man, the nicest man I ever met. I chased him for a long time! We were together for 16 years."

Alice, who lived for many years in Jenner Road, had no children, but has a number of nieces and nephews.

Sarah Lofthouse, the staff nurse, said: "Alice is incredible for her age. She delights everyone with all her tales and her company.

"Despite her age she is still very lucid."

One of Bella Vista's carers, Gemma O'Donovan, added: "Alice is a fun-loving person and enjoys holding court in the home."

'Barry 10' set for restoration

THE new operator of the Barry Rail Centre, The Cambrian Group, has announced plans for the restoration of the remaining 'Barry 10' steam locomotives.

Cambrian Group chairman, John Buxton, explained: "The Barry 10 were the last of the steam locomotives remaining at Dai Woodham's historic Barry scrapyard to await restoration.

"The exciting plans are the culmination of more than 10 years of work undertaken by Cambrian with the Vale Council to secure a future for them, ensuring they continue to be available to future generations to understand our railway heritage."

Coun Rhodri Traherne, cabinet member for economic development at the Vale Council, said: "These plans will mean that the locomotives continue to be a source of pride for the people of Barry, both accessible to enjoy when they are operated in Barry, and to act as ambassadors for the town across the country."

Penarth couple threatened by man with a machete

by AJ SICLUNA

A PENARTH couple were terrified when they were threatened by a man with a machete, Cardiff Crown Court has heard.

One of them, Catherine Ryan, has been so terrified she cannot sleep and refuses to answer the door to anyone.

James Goode (24) of Penarth, had been convicted by Barry Magistrates of using threatening words and behaviour, possessing a bladed article and possessing cannabis and amphetamine, and had been committed to the Crown Court for sentence.

He was jailed for 12 months, suspended for 18 months, ordered to carry out 200 hours unpaid work, made subject to a supervision order for 18 months, and ordered to pay £300 costs.

A restraining order was also imposed in respect of the couple.

Prosecutor Sian Phillips said that at about 5pm on February 28, Goode was seen leaning out of a window at a house in St Paul's Avenue, Penarth, shouting abuse at people, saying:"Stay there, I'm coming to have you."

Ms Ryan and her partner, Thomas Huxtable, were aware of the disturbance and got into their car.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

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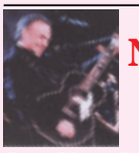
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CONFUSING THE ELECTORATE

WHAT a shambles this election campaign has turned out to be; the electorate are already confused with the tiers of government and the responsibilities covered by them, and now the political parties in their leaflets talk of health and education among other issues.

It is quite obvious to me that if the politicians have not yet found out that health and education in Wales are devolved to the Welsh Assembly, then what are they doing standing in this election, and how do they expect the electorate to understand?

Another issue mentioned is immigration; when will they understand that the UK has no control of immigrants from Europe? When border controls were withdrawn, the door was opened to all member countries of the EU to come in.

Many people took no interest in the many treaties which the Westminster Government signed Britain up to – now they live to regret it.

I just hope that whoever is elected to Government this week, they will quickly wake up to the many issues facing the working class people of Wales – as the most important issue in this election for me is a fair funding package for Wales. Until this is resolved, we will always be the poor relations of the UK.

Gwyn John, Llantwit Major

'All Hands to Flying Stations'

Did you ever serve on board any of the light fleet carriers, *HMS Bulwark, HMS Albion* or *HMS Centaur*?

The *HMS Bulwark Albion Centaur* Association is open to anyone who served at any time on these shops. There is a magazine three times per year, plus events including AGM/Socials, sea-days with our new ships, *HMS Albion* and *Bulwark*, and anniversary commemorations at home and abroad.

This year's AGM and social is at *HMS Nelson*, Portsmouth on Saturday May 8. We also sponsor sea cadets from our affiliated SCCs on the Training Ship *Royalist*. Enquiries to Leigh Easton, Glenmoray, Hayford Place, Cambusbarron, Stirling, FK7 9JX; e-mail at ngsfo@tiscali.co.uk or visit our website for further details at www.bulwarkassoc.plus.com

Leigh Easton, Membership Secretary.

Barry tourism ideas

HOW interesting and encouraging it was to read Mrs Deborah Baker's letter in last week's GEM on future tourism for Barry.

It was so practical and realistic in its application and in its reading of the future by attracting greater numbers of staying tourists to Barry as a holiday resort.

I could only wish that this forward thinking was more prevalent among those who have the power to make it happen.

AC Forte, Barry

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'VALE'S POSTAL VOTE PROBLEM COULD AFFECT ELECTION RESULTS'

I WAS disappointed to read (in The GEM) that there had been a problem with the postal votes for the forthcoming general election.

It brought back memories of my own problem in 2005. I was abroad and did not have time to arrange a postal vote for the general election, so arranged a proxy vote for my brother to vote on my behalf.

I was upset to learn on my return that he had been unable to vote for me at the polling station in Cowbridge town hall when he turned up to do so.

I checked with the electoral section on my return and they confirmed that I had arranged the proxy vote correctly.

I then wrote to the Vale Council to express my concern and received NO reply. Anyone who may have a similar problem on Thursday, should speak to the presiding officer in charge of the polling station and, if necessary, demand that the electoral registration officer is contacted.

When we live in a constituency that has been as marginal as 19 votes in the past each and every vote is very important.

I hope that all the postal votes that have been cast will be counted so that no one is disenfranchised.

(Name and address supplied)

ANOTHER WORD FOR DROPPINGS!

RECENT letters to The GEM on the subject of animal droppings have suggested, by its notable omission, that the writers have forgotten that there is an old, correct and inoffensive word for it; dung (hence dung beetle).

'Poo(h)' is a childish, exclamatory, nose pinching reaction to a bad smell.

Dung is produced by horse, cow, bear, bison, buffalo, elephant, camel and many other animals.

Not until it is spread on the land as fertilizer should it be described as 'manure'.

It makes a good fire for human warmth and cooking, when it has a different name – fuel.

AG Head, Llantwit Major

Road to nowhere at Dinas Powys!

EVERY now and then I read an article about some hair-brained scheme that this council has dreamed up for the Vale and get so incensed that I am determined to write in and air my opinions.

Of course, I calm down a few days later and do nothing, but the latest article about the Dinas bus lane and the comments by Coun Jeff James made my blood boil.

Myself and quite a few of my friends thought it was a road-widening scheme and actually thought it a good idea – but then found out it is a bus lane – all of 400 yards long, starting nowhere and ending nowhere!

With all the chaos that is already on that stretch of road at Dinas Powys comes a cunning plan to take the odd bus out of the traffic jam and then try to get it back in again 400 yards up the road.

How? Is it going to push its way in, or are we to have another set of lights to add further to the already congested stretch of road?

His view that "more people will be encouraged to move from their cars and try public transport" defies belief.

All that work, all that disruption and all that money for a pathetic bus lane on the road to nowhere... And don't get me started on the lights around the Merrie Harrier!

Alan Jones, Barry

Garden visitor a sparrowhawk?

MICHAEL CARPENTER'S garden bird visitor (GEM letters, recently) sounds exciting, but from the behaviour he describes we suggest it is much more likely to be a Sparrowhawk.

There are healthy populations of both Sparrowhawk and Peregrine in the Vale, but the former is regularly seen harassing small birds in gardens, whereas the latter usually swoops on its prey from high in the sky.

Among the features that help to clinch an identification are that Sparrowhawks have piercing yellow eyes, but those of Peregrines are dark.

Peregrines have dark hoods extending on to their cheeks, but Sparrowhawks have a thin white stripe over the eye giving them a fierce look.

Even a poor photograph may be sufficient to distinguish between them.

Linda and Rob Nottage, Bonvilston

'Money best spent on traffic lights'

THE Dinas Powys bus lane scheme was featured recently in The GEM.

Several months ago, I attended a site meeting along with councillors and Vale representatives.

As a member of the public, my questions had to be presented through a councillor.

Q1. *Will the old established hedgerow be preserved?*

I was assured it would be removed and re-sited. Did the construction workers fail in this assurance, as the hedgerow has been completely destroyed?

I sincerely trust it will be restored, with a new hedge line.

Q2. *How will buses enter the traffic flow?*

Answer - There will be yet another designated set of traffic lights and CCTV to register drivers abusing the bus lane.

Q3. *How long is the bus lane?*

Answer - 440 metres.

What an utter waste of public money, only allowing buses and emergency services to exit Dinas Powys. What about the return journey?

I wonder if Coun Jeff James has given any thought to his comment. Does he think 440 metres of cycle track and footpath will further encourage people to cycle and walk more?

The funds would be better spent on audible zebra and pelican controlled traffic lights, to enable the partially and non-vision walkers to cross the roads safely.

A Gee, Dinas Powys

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FLOOD LINE 0845 9881188
HELPLINES
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National Drugs Helpline **0800 776600**
DASH **01656 650686**
SSAFA – Forces Help for serving and ex-service men, women and families **01656 785435**
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Inroads Drugs Project – 42, Holton Road, Barry. 01446 404040.
Vale Victim & Witness Support - Barry Magistrates Court, Thompson Street, Barry CF63 4SX. 01446 730704.

MP & AM's SURGERY TIMES

To make a surgery appointment with John Smith MP, contact the constituency office (01446) 743769. Office hours are 9am-5pm. Answerphone service outside office hours.

To make a surgery appointment with Jane Hutt AM, contact the constituency office (01446) 740981. Office hours are 9am-5pm. Answerphone service outside office hours.

CITIZENS' ADVICE

At 119 Broad Street, Barry. Drop in Mon-Fri (not Weds) 9.30am - 4.30am (Wed 11am-6pm); at Llantwit Major Youth Centre, Station Road 9.30am - 11.30am Mon and Fri. Telephone advice 0845 120 3756. *Further information www.adviceguide.org.uk*

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Police - Gladstone Road, Barry; for normal service 01446 734451; in emergency 999. Fire - South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Pontyclun 01443 232000; in emergency 999. Coastguard - Regional Office, Swansea 01792 366534; in emergency 999.

Gas - Gas emergency number 0800 111999.

Electricity - Emergency 0800 0520400; Water - Emergency 0800 052 0130; supply 0800 0520130.

Trading Standards Consumer Advice Centre - Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry; hours of opening for telephone enquiries - Monday to Thursday, 8.30am-5pm; Friday 8.30am-4.30pm on 01446 700111. For personal visits, Monday to Thursday 9am-4.30pm. Friday 9am-4pm. Recycling Hotline, 01446 700111.

To report a fly tipping incident - 01446 700111.

HOSPITALS

The Barry Hospital - visiting 2pm-8pm each day, 01446 704000. Llandough - Wards have individual visiting times. For details call 029 2071 1711. Princess of Wales - 01656 752752/668090.

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Local men are jailed for drugs dealing

Report by AJ SICLUNA

A sharp-eyed CCTV operator spotted something suspicious going on in the centre of Barry

Soon afterwards, two men were arrested and at Cardiff Crown Court were put behind bars for a total of 39 months.

Anthony Curnick (19) a trainee chef at Bonvilston, and Kyle Rees (24) of Cowbridge, each admitted possessing cannabis with intent to supply, supplying cannabis and offering to supply ecstasy.

Curnick, in addition, admitted offering to supply ketamine, possessing amphetamine and ketamine, and producing cannabis.

Curnick received 21 months in a young offenders institution and Rees was sent to prison for 18 months.

Prosecutor David Thomas said a Barry CCTV operator became suspicious when he saw the pair in Barry.

The police later stopped a car in Gladstone Road, driven by Rees, with Curnick a passenger..

Inside, under the front seat, was cannabis worth £720 and there was more cannabis in the glove compartment.

Mr Thomas said Curnick admitted supplying cannabis to feed his own habit for about a month.

Curnick's home, a caravan, was searched and a number of cannabis plants were found.

Rees told the police he had been drugs dealing for "a couple of months" because of his financial circumstances.

Curnick's counsel, Stephen Jeary, said he had difficulty with drugs use and expected custody, but he didn't supply for commercial profit.

Roger Griffiths, for Rees, said he had turned to drugs to alleviate debts of about £1,000.

Residents vote Dave a first class postman!

DAVE MARTIN from Penarth is one of 10 Welsh 'posties' voted "First Class" in a Royal Mail competition to find the UK Postman/Woman of the year.

The 10 Welsh postmen were considered to have gone "above and beyond the call of duty" in their communities.

Dave Martin was nominated by 20 local residents, including local businesses in Cardiff Bay, where he delivers a prompt, efficient and excellent service to customers, who refer to him as a 'First Class postman in every way – courteous friendly and going out of his way to help and assist while out on his rounds.'

Read your GEM online: barry-today.co.uk

Success smells sweet for Miss Vale, Courtenay!

RECENTLY crowned Miss Vale of Glamorgan, Courtenay Hamilton, discovered just what victory smells like when she was presented with her very own signature scent.

Welsh-speaker Courtenay, a 20-year-old learning support assistant at Ysgol Pen-Y-Garth in Penarth, was treated to a pampering evening and got to have her very own perfume blended and named after her as a prize for winning the Miss Vale of Glamorgan final, where she competed against 14 others at the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl.

The experience came courtesy of Senses In The City, the brainchild of Marina Lois, Claire Viader and Kerry Voke.

This new Welsh pampering business was designed for groups of women to enjoy in their own home, at select venues and holiday get-aways.

Having launched the business in January, Courtenay was one of the first Miss Wales finalists to have her perfume made and be treated to the Senses In The City experience, which involves locally-sourced fine food and wine, holistic therapy and a bespoke perfume-making experience.

Claire, director of Holistic Therapies, said: "Courtenay has been working very hard raising money for The Joshua Foundation children's cancer charity and so we were delighted to be able to offer her what we think is the ultimate girly pampering experience."

Courtenay, who is currently recording a classical album and hails from Llantwit Major, said: "I'm so grateful to the ladies at Senses In The City for giving me a lovely massage and presenting me with my perfume, which I have named Courtenay.

"I combined the different blends to make quite a floral fragrance, which I love.

"I never knew you could have your own perfume made. My friends are so jealous."

Senses In The City will be giving the other Miss Wales regional heat winners the same experience.

Pampering time for Courtenay.

Machete man was 'immature'

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Goode appeared and stood by the car holding the machete, waving it about and saying he would kill Mr Huxtable. The couple thought he was under the influence of drugs.

The police later went to his home and found the weapon in a sheath,

Two cannabis plants and amphetamine were found.

Peter Hardin-Roberts, defending, said there was bad blood between Goode and Mr Huxtable, and his behaviour was immature.

Judge Phillip Hughes said: "When people carry a machete in a public place, people can get badly hurt."

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Chef's Signature Dishes (NEW)

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PERI PERI MURGH £5.50
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MURGH JOLPAI £5.50
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TASTY – WHOLESOME – NATURAL – FRESHLY PREPARED – HEALTHY – TASTY – WHOLESOME – NATURAL – FRESHLY PREPARED – HEALTHY

ALL SAINTS STUDY LOCAL HABITATS

YOUNGSTERS from All Saints Church in Wales Primary School enjoyed a hands-on science lesson in Cwm Talwg Woods.

The year-2 pupils, led by Sheena O'Leary, Forestry Commission education officer, went on a minibeast hunt.

They studied a variety of habitats and they collected and observed a range of small creatures which inhabit the woods.

They were careful to put them safely back afterwards, and they even watched a tree surgeon trimming back one of the older trees.

During the afternoon, Sheena accompanied year-1 to the woods to study forest senses, learning about the sights, sounds, textures and scents of the woodland environment.

Teachers Mrs Evans, Mrs Martin and Miss Mackintosh also learnt some new and interesting facts during these visits to the woodland, and they thanked Sheena for an exciting day of science and discovery. **NM**

Sully Bridge Club results

Winners of the club Annual Ladder Tournament, Trish Tracy/Betty Lewis, are presented with the Peter Cross trophy.

RESULTS from Sully Bridge Club areas follows:

April 19:

N/S 1st PamSherman/Pat Verdon
2nd Judy Collins/Shirley Powell
3rdVal Hetheridge/Peter Blackwell.

E/W 1st Peter Millar/Trish Tracy
2nd Alan Jones/Carolyn Matthews.

April 21:

N/S 1st Betty Lewis/Trish Tracy
2nd Pat Evans/Roger Cradick
3rd Ev Kerslake/Ann Williams.

E/W 1st Mary Blackwell/Tony Hall
2nd Beryl Marks/Carol Cochlin
3rd Mair Colley/Joyce Doughty.

April 24:

N/S 1st Peter Millar/Trish Tracy
2ndPam Sherman/Pat Verdonl
3rd Shirley Powell/Una Gavin.

E/W 1st Mary Cartwright/Pat Walker
2ndVal Davies/Carol Cochlin
3rd Anne Macdougall/Sean Macdougall.

LOCAL MOD BASE GETS BAKING FOR TY HAFAN

PERSONNEL working at the MoD St Athan base had a treat recently when members of the St Athan SWARM social club carried out a station-wide cake sale.

The ladies of SWARM are taking part in the Ty Hafan Sleep Walk in Cardiff and the idea of the cake sale was twofold – to raise awareness of the work that Ty Hafan does for families in Wales, and to boost the fundraising that the ladies have already done.

Diane Jones, wife of the CO of 4SofTT, has seen at first hand the work that the hospice does with families when she visited last year.

Diane said: "Ty Hafan is an amazing place. It is staffed by teams of dedicated people who work so hard for the families who go there.

"It is a wonderful facility which is self-funded and is why it is so important that people not only understand what they do, but that they realise how important it is for us to support them."

Diane concluded: "I have never seen so many cakes in one place! The response we had was wonderful, I even had someone knock at the door to say she had heard we were doing a cake sale and she had baked some cakes. Thanks to everyone who baked and bought, the sale was a great success and, we raised an additional £300."

ABOVE: The SWARM tempting trainees of No 4 SofTT trainees with some homebaked goodies.

SPRING FAYRE

FAMILY bargains abound at the annual spring fayre in St Paul's Church Hall, St Paul's Avenue, Barry this Saturday, May 8 at 2pm.

Stalls include home produce, books and CDs, gifts and cards, homemade cakes, bric-a-brac.

Admission 50p, big raffle with a first prize of £50. Proceeds support the work of Merthyr Dyfan and St Paul's churches.

Penllyne party for popular Dai's 50th birthday

A LUNCHEON party to celebrate the 50th birthday of Penllyne resident David Harris was held in the Village Hall, Penllyne on Sunday.

It was followed in the evening by further celebrations at The Fox public house, conveniently located just a short distance from the family home.

Family and friends from far afield, including David's former university colleagues who travelled from Leicester, celebrated late into the night.

Born at the RAF St Athan hospital, which is now part of the golf course, David has spent all his working life supporting the farming community and is Show Director for the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Society,

He lives at Penllyne near Cowbridge with his wife Pam and children Rhydian and Dewi.

All four family members devote a tremendous amount of time and energy helping to organise the annual Vale Show, which this year is being held a week earlier, on Wednesday, August 11.

A specially commissioned family photograph was released to commemorate the occasion, with David, a passionate Welshman, proudly wearing his Welsh kilt.

TMcC

You can now read your GEM online at:
barry-today.co.uk

Cadoxton school pupils dress up to mark Earth Day

ABOVE and LEFT: Getting in the mood for Earth Day.

FOLLOWING their success in obtaining an Eco flag last year, the pupils of Cadoxton Primary School again celebrated Earth Day on April 22.

They took part in activities, such as planting seeds, replicating the natural and man made world and making Victorian toys from recycled materials. Year-6 surprised everyone with a fashion show, even their teachers dressed up!" a spokeswoman reported.

"Everyone was very busy and had lots of fun! Thank you to all the children, parents and staff for their support."

News from the Townswomen's Guild of Barry

AT the last Guild meeting the speaker, Mrs Yvonne Thomas, gave a very lively and interesting talk on her visit to a medical centre and school in India.

The visit was sponsored and supported by Barry Bethel Baptist church.

The talk was illustrated by slides, which showed school rooms, dormitory and lessons held out in the open.

Three members attended the annual general meeting of the South Wales Federation in Cardiff, where the speaker was Mr David Padmore from Cardiff bus company. He gave a very humorous account of his work as a driver, inspector, his talks given to various schools, and the history and background of the bus company.

Chairman Kate Rees was made vice-president of the federation for the forthcoming year, which is an honour for the Barry Guild.

At the social studies meeting we had several discussions, and made plans for future meetings.

The next Guild meeting will be on Monday May 10 when Edgar Eskins will be giving a talk on 60 years in the Post Office.

NEWS FROM YSGOL SANT CURIG

PUPILS ENTERTAIN AT NURSING HOME

CHILDREN from Sant Curig recently visited Springbanks nursing home to bring a little cheer to the residents!

"The residents were treated to a feast of singing, reciting and dancing by the children. Everyone enjoyed it immensely and we're all looking forward to our next visit!" a spokesperson reported

Reading at home

THIS term, the reception classes launched their home reading scheme.

The children have enjoyed homework tasks for some time but on April 23, they were thrilled to have the opportunity to take their Welsh reading books home for the first time!

Following a very successful meeting with the parents a fortnight ago, the school was delighted to receive a thank you letter and a gift of £300 from Ms Emma Jones and Motion Rail Limited, towards the running of the scheme.

RJ and DJ

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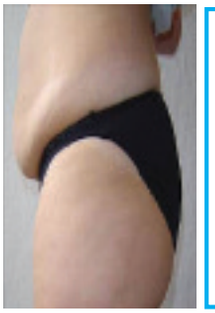

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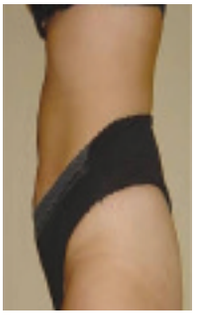

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Readers' Letters

We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. Letters and emails MUST include full address and a contact telephone number. An email address alone is not sufficient. We will (*in certain circumstances*), protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters brief and address them to: The Editor, Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL.

CENTRES GOOD FOR THE VALE

AS an ex-Barrian, I was pleased to read about proposals by two local groups to establish a Heritage Centre and an Arts Centre in the town.

Both initiatives are long overdue and would provide facilities that both Barry and the Vale are lacking. They would benefit the local community and visitors alike, as well as giving new life to redundant buildings.

I wish both groups every success, and hope that their proposals receive the full support of the population and of the planning and funding authorities.

Gillian Drake, Barry

'Don't forget the fulltime firemen'

COWBRIDGE Fire station celebrates its 50th year this month, well done! But anyone would think it has been run by retained crews judging by photos published of the retained firemen.

The station has been run by fulltime firemen for over for over 40 years and now all you hear about is the retained men. Are the public aware that there are still 13 fulltime firemen at Cowbridge Fire Station? They are the backbone of the fire station, because without them, the retained personnel wouldn't have a clue.

So let's see some support for our fulltime firemen and celebrate the station's 50th year by giving the full timers credit where credit is due; and not use the 50th anniversary as a recruitment drive for more retained, so that the fire service can get rid of the fulltime posts at Cowbridge.

(Name and address supplied)

Heavy drinking, glass smashing, litter louts... IS THIS A TOWN'S LEGACY?

MY attention was caught by a recent GEM headline – 'Whose town is this anyway?'

Obviously, it was a rhetorical question by letter writer M Stevens.

At the moment, the town of Llantwit Major is the domain of heavy drinking, glass smashing and litter louts whose deep sense of history is the legacy of a generation that got fed up with fighting the Bosch and decided to drink away their cares and worries, because it seemed like a good idea at the time.

The 21st century holds up a different challenge for the people of Llantwit Major to contemplate.

As the town was possibly the original seat of education in this country, surely to listen to the older, educated members of society with a wealth of knowledge, would seem to be the more sensible option.

I have it on good authority from people nearly twice my age, that they will only teach by example, and find it almost impossible to give direct advice – preferring, it would seem, to allow young people to learn by their mistakes.

It is, therefore, my contention that nothing has changed, except the fact that the population has probably doubled.

The youth are chomping at the bit, trying to create a town steeped in the history of an older generation who obviously (prematurely) overcelebrated the end of a war, which never really ended The town belongs to whoever wants to make it – you get what you want!

(Name and address supplied)

'Future of St Athan is in the balance'

THE St Athan project lies in the balance after the election, whatever the result.

The Strategic Defence Review means some hard choices, with scaling down of standing forces by 15-20 per cent predicted.

The projected number of trainees is far less than the original 6,000 figure; 2,700 was given at the public inquiry, which may shrink further to 2,200.

The MoD's fall-back option is said to use the Blandford, Dorset base, where the 4,000 units of accommodation and associated facilities (eating, sport etc) are more than sufficient.

Little new-build would be needed for service family accommodation, unlike the 473 units planned at St Athan at around £100 million.

Some 200 administrative staff there are to transfer to Metrix and move to St Athan.

If the tri-service training was sited at Blandford, the dislocation and costs would be avoided.

The MoD has no alternative plans for Blandford. Pre-election they agreed to leave most of the Army Information Systems (AIS) branch) there (48 out of the 53 jobs to stay).

None of the Vale of Glamorgan candidates mentioned the likelihood of St Athan's cancellation, but will the new MP deny this logic?

Max Wallis, Penarth

Five months for a parcel delivery

I ordered a parcel from ebay back in December 2009 by 1st Class postage – and after a few days I hadn't received it.

I contacted the seller and they kindly sent out a replacement, this time 1st class recorded which arrived next day.

Last week, I received the original parcel with the invoice inside dated December 2009. It has taken the Royal Mail postage service over five months to deliver a parcel posted in the UK to my address in Barry...

We all know letters go missing, but this was a Jiffy Bag with computer equipment inside.

Surely it should not take five months to deliver a parcel?

Jonathan Drake, Barry

Barry Island could be transformed...

PLANS for consultation on the future of Nells Point highlighted by Coun Traherne (GEM April 29) are to be welcomed only if ambitions for the future of Barry Island by the Vale Council are significantly raised.

The Island faces a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform it into an all-year-round, all-weather family tourist destination.

The council say the proposals for the Nells Point site are just those put forward by their consultants.

The underlying issue is what was the brief given to the consultants?

Have the consultants been given too low a target to aim for?

Further evidence of the council's low aspirations is in its recently-proposed tourism strategy for the Vale of Glamorgan and Barry Island.

This essentially focuses on catering for the day-tripper market; rather than realising the potential of Barry Island as one of the nearest beach resorts to Birmingham, and the first beach resort for English tourists along the M4.

We currently have potential redevelopment of the Waterfront, the former fairground site, and Nells Point, with no seemingly joined-up thinking between getting the maximum output and synergy from these developments.

The council should consult, not just on plans for Nells Point, but the whole challenge of transforming Barry Island into an attractive tourist destination – to provide a boost for the local economy and transform the image of the area.

We need a consensus on future development; but it has to begin at a much higher starting point than the current quick-fix being proposed.

Andy Green, Barry

Digital Switchover 'help is available'

I WAS sorry to read about the issues Patricia Price has been experiencing since digital switchover ('That unnecessary digital switchover', GEM letters page on April 22).

The Switchover Help Scheme has been helping older and disabled people in south Wales make the change to digital TV by giving practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover.

In south Wales, we have provided more than 40,000 people with easy-to-use equipment that suits customers' needs, installation of that equipment and a demonstration of how it works.

Importantly, once you have taken up our help and equipment, the Help Scheme also provides free aftercare for a year, which includes help with retuning.

If you aren't using Help scheme equipment, or aren't eligible for the scheme, you can still get advice on digital TV from Digital UK on 08456 505050.

Eligibility for the Switchover Help Scheme closed on April 30, but our customers will still be receiving aftercare for many months yet, with no extra costs.

Melfyn Clwyd Roberts (Switchover Help Scheme National Manager, Wales)

'Nightmare' digital television reception

I agree with your correspondent James Wild, Llantwit Major (GEM letters April 8), about the digital switchover as I have been having almost nightmare reception since the switchover.

I was watching the Masters golf on Sunday night and the contest was supposed to be screened until 12pm.

However, just as the most exciting part was reaching its climax at 11pm, suddenly the coverage was gone. I was confronted by world news and I could not get it back.

Since then, it has frozen on the image time after time particularly on the advertising channels.

Now I have had an amplifier digital box fitted and I am crossing my fingers but not holding my breath.

Mrs D E Coombes Herridge, Barry

'THANK YOU HELPLINE'

REGARDING Patricia Price's letter concerning digital switchover, I write in praise of BBC Helpline and am a 'happy' viewer.

I was terrified prior to the change and made my family's life a misery moaning why so many channels when we are unable to get usual ones?

Now I am a contented and selective viewer, mainly due to the 'Helpline' folk who made it easy for me.

They were kind and considerate at all times, no matter what time of day you telephoned them.

My picture before the switchover was temperamental and spasmodic now it is distinctly visible.

I reiterate my grateful thanks to all the "Helpline" team.

Well done.

Mrs JR Pooley, Barry

Good job!

WITH regard to the general election, Gordon Brown has, in my opinion, done a pretty good job under difficult circumstances.

For example, Christmas fuel payments and bus passes.

Mrs Thatcher privatised gas, electricity and water and bills have since gone sky high.

Let us not forget the miners. The way they were treated was a national disgrace.

The upper classes would not understand that, as they live on another planet to us.

John Kenefick, Barry

EMAIL YOUR NEWS

● *WE welcome your news, views and sports items.*

Please email them to the Editorial Department at:

ggem@internet-today.co.uk

OBITUARY

Mrs Sarah M (Sallie) Evans of Barry.
January 11, 1908 - April 3, 2010

Remembering Sallie – 102 years, and not a moment wasted!

THE funeral took place recently of Mrs Sarah (Sallie) Evans, who died in Llandough Hospital at the age of 102.

Her daughter, NERYS, has written the following tribute to a woman who loved education and the arts, and lived a "creative and joyful life".

ON Easter Saturday, Mrs Sarah (Sallie) Evans died in Llandough Hospital. Her children, Dr Gareth B Evans of Hertfordshire and Nerys M Evans from Australia were with her.

Born in Hole in the Wall Street, Caernarvon, Sallie lived a creative and joyful 102 years.

The first part of her life was filled with the arts. With her father, Owen Edwards, she entertained hospitalised troops during and after WW1.

As a young woman, Mrs Evans performed in BBC radio plays, but she said her finest hour was playing Hedda Gabla in the first Welsh language performance of Ibsen's famous play.

On trips to see her cousins in Barry as a teenager, she had noticed a young athlete – a sprinter who was Victor Ludorum of the four Welsh universities.

He was eight years older and to the teenage Sallie, he looked like a "Greek god".

Some time later, after eight years teaching in Birkenhead, on Easter Saturday 1939, Sallie married that sporting hero of her childhood.

He was Brynmor Hamer Evans of Tynewydd Road and she moved to Barry after a honeymoon in Paris.

Teaching and education were extremely important to Mrs Evans. Students hoped to be in her classes and loved it if they were.

She herself never stopped learning. Her interests included theatre, music, puppetry, the Pre-Raphaelites and heraldry.

Her own talents in art and all crafts were on display in her home, in her chapel, Tabernacl, and where people are lucky enough to have a sample of her work.

With husband Bryn, Sallie devoted years to the Citizens' Advice Bureau from its infancy in 1963.

She instigated and produced The May Queen Concerts to raise money for The Save the Children Fund.

Mrs Evans was involved with the Cymrodorion Society and Merched y Wawr and was presented with the Women's Voluntary Service Medal.

When the National Eisteddfod came to Barry in 1968, Mrs Evans suggested, and was then asked, to co-ordinate the production of Benjamin Britten's *Noyes Fludde*.

Almost 2,000 children from the Vale took part and performed to an audience of more than 8,000.

Sallie loved to laugh and sing. She loved her clubs, her chapel community, her neighbours and friends. She loved her grandchildren David and Michael.

Her husband and her children came first, always. She loved Caernarvon and Barry but, almost above all, Sallie loved being Welsh and a speaker of Cymraeg.

Sallie loved the 'Song and Heartbeat' of Wales. *Gwlad Beirdd a Chantorion*.

While she could talk, she sang and when she sang, she spread the joy of the music in her very Welsh soul.

ER. COF ANNWYL

A poem for Sallie:
'My Mother is Sunshine'

Red curls, top hat
Dancing with Dadda
Singing for soldiers
Red hair flying
Over Caernarvon Walls
Brenin a Frentines
Red-headed Hedda
Yny Nghymraeg
My Mother is Sunshine

Marrying my father
Green eyes sparkling
Honeymoon in Paris
Give us a "sws" Sal
War time in Barry
Ration Books and Children
Too busy to worry then
Hallelujah, Lights and Dancing
My Mother is Sunshine

Warm and Efficient
All over Europe
On holidays together
Aunties and Uncles
"Look at the view"
Stop for a photo
Primus store pumping
Roadside bouquets
My Mother is Sunshine

Puppets and heraldry
Pre Raphaelites, Eisteddfodan
On stage with Cynan
A oes Heddwch? Heddwch
Making her banners
For Tabernacl Chapel
Flying to her children
Canada, America, Australia
My Mother is Sunshine

Eighty, ninety, Calon Lan
White haired one hundred
Leading the singing
Sleeping and smiling
Wedi Blino
Sitting and singing
Hiraeth sydd
Yn torrin nghalon
My Mother is Sunshine

My hero, my inspiration
"Cusses and Kiddles"
Bright and Beautiful
Ardderchog, fy nghariad
My Mother is Sunshine

Nerys Evans

'It's back to the chalet?'

AS a life-long visitor and now resident of Barry Island, I am disappointed at the unimaginative idea of erecting a static caravan site on the former Butlins land at Nells Point.

What is the point? Another bland, featureless, unattractive caravan site when there are so many on seemingly every headland along the south Wales coast (Spinney, St Mary's Well Bay, Marconi, Fontygary).

OK, as it currently stands, the area in question is no beauty spot, but surely there is something else more desirable and up-to-date to boost local tourism?

Even another car park would be more appealing, although an indoor swimming pool/park wouldn't go amiss for all those inevitable rainy days...

Josey Evans, Barry Island

NEWS FROM THE PENARTH AND DISTRICT RAMBLERS

Following old tram road along the waterfalls trail

RECENTLY 12 walkers joined Clive for a trip down to the Neath Valley converging at the Angel pub in the village of Pontneddfechan.

This area was renowned for sandstone which was extensively worked from the 18th to 20th centuries in underground mines.

In the steep gorges of the rivers Nedd Fechan and Afon Mellte, beds of very hard pure sandstone commonly known as Silica Rock were a target for miners.

Tramways were forced through the most difficult terrain to reach the mine entrances and then horse-drawn drams took rocks to the brickworks.

In lovely sunshine, the group followed the old tram road on the left side of the Nedd Fechan, observing some of the smaller falls as they walked.

Along the route are old mine entrances and the relics of its industrial heritage in the shape of stone sleepers still with holes in them and in the rocks above, plant fossils that have been there for millions of years.

The first major fall they reached was Sgwd Gwladys or Lady Falls, formed by water gushing over hard sandstone to plunge into a large pool below and it is still slowly eroding the rock at a rate of 1.3-metres every thousand years.

Crossing a footbridge and moving upstream they reached the Horseshoe Falls, which is surrounded by oak trees, followed by Scwd Ddwli upper and lower gushing falls.

A rather undulating muddy river bank led them to Pont Melin-fach for morning coffee at the picnic area.

Tree-lined gorges led them to the Afon Mellte and more waterfalls beginning with Sgwd Clun-Gwyn (white meadow falls) which they viewed from above. Taking a path where forest management had occurred they descended to Sgwd y Pannwr (waterfall of the fuller) where a group of youngsters were gorge walking before scrambling up a rocky path to view Sgwd Isaf Clun-gwyn (lower white meadow falls) hidden in a corner behind trees.

The group retraced their steps, climbing steeply to the main path where they found a place to enjoy their well-earned lunch in hot sunshine.

Then it was time to descend to the last fall, Sgwd yr Eira (fall of snow) situated on the Afon Hepste and taking the narrow slippery old drovers path the group were sprayed with water as they went underneath the fall to the other side of the valley to climb huge steps uphill to the top of the cwm. Crossing the Afon Nedd by bridge they headed downstream and through Pontneddfechan back to their start.

On May 1 is a 12.5-mile moderate circular train ramble taking in Bridgend, Newton and Merthyr Mawr Warren. Trains leave Cogan at 0848, Dinas at 0853, and Barry at 0905, please remember there is only one train per hour so don't miss it! Contact Joy on 01446 737131 for further information.

On May 2, meet at 9.30am at Cogan Leisure Centre for a 6-mile moderate walk at the Newport Wetlands; contact Stan on 029 2025 7135.

Rucksack badges, programmes and membership advice can be obtained from Pam on 029 2021 9102.

JOY STRANGWARD

Pupils take part in a televised political debate

ABOVE: Pupils ask the questions.

BARRY Comprehensive School recently took part in a BBC series of reports on devolution and its impact on the election.

Allan Little and his film crew dropped in on an A-level politics lesson where issues involving devolution were being discussed.

"Under the direction of teacher Julie Lander, there was a lively debate between students expressing their opinions for and against devolution, as well as considering if the Welsh Assembly might serve as a model for the expected hung parliament in Westminster."

Miss Lander, who joined the school from Northern Ireland, was then interviewed by Mr Little, comparing the public attitudes towards the assemblies in Cardiff and Stormont.

The report was broadcast on Monday, April 26 on the BBC4 World News and the BBC1 10 o'clock news.

Student marks 65th birthday with marathon

AN award-winning Barry College student has finally achieved his ambition to run the London Marathon at the age of 65.

Norman Jones, who graduated with a personal trainer diploma from the college last year, completed the race in five hours and 43 minutes.

He joked: "I was placed 180th in my age group, but there might have been only 181 in it.

He continued: "I've run half-marathons before, but this was my first and my only full marathon – never again.

"I would to say to people if you are going to run a marathon, this is the one to do – the atmosphere was incredible.

"It's 26 miles, with people lining the route all the way, encouraging you. I feel sorry for the people who run it for a fast time – they've got their head down and they're running while I was going slowly and could see and enjoy all the sights!"

Norman, who lives in Abergavenny, won the adult learning award at Barry College's annual prize giving ceremony in March for his outstanding commitment to his course.

He has also arranged a 1980s-style 'aerobathon' in Cardiff city centre for Children in Need, and raised hundreds of pounds for Welsh soldiers serving in Afghanistan.

Plaid AM hits out at airport critic

PLAID AM Chris Franks has slammed a fellow Assembly Member for criticising Wales's main airport during an outburst in the Senedd.

During a debate on the National Transport Plan, Mohammad Asghar, AM for South East Wales, interrupted Transport Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones to say Cardiff Airport "is not and never will be" an international-standard airport.

Mr Asghar defected from Plaid Cymru to the Conservatives some months ago.

The row erupted after Mr Asghar had earlier asked the deputy minister to "seriously consider making sure that air transport and road transport are done properly" in the Newport area.

Ieuan Wyn Jones later questioned whether that was Tory Party policy or Mr Asghar's own, adding: " I have yet to hear the Conservatives call for an international airport outside Cardiff."

In the subsequent intervention, Mr Asghar replied: "I was talking about an international-standard airport, which Cardiff Airport is not and never will be.

"Therefore, why not think differently and create something that is of world standard, which will draw investors and entrepreneurs into Wales?"

South Wales Central AM Chris Franks, who was also taking part in the debate, later said he was "astonished" by Mr Asghar's outburst.

He added: "Mr Asghar is doing Cardiff Airport a great disservice with these comments.

"Perhaps he does not realise that the airport welcomes more than two million passengers a year and flies directly to 50 different destinations.

"It also provides more than 1,000 jobs. I am hopeful the airport will build on this success and grow to be even bigger and better in the future."

MP's parting shot at council officers, but all in all...

'I've led a charmed working life and it's all gone in the blink of an eye!' – says John Smith

ABOVE: Former Vale MP, John Smith

Interview by TIM CHAPMAN

TODAY one of seven parliamentary candidates will succeed John Smith as MP for the Vale – and as he reflected on his years in Parliament Mr Smith told The GEM that his greatest achievement was a classic example of how an ordinary citizen can use their elected representative to make a real difference in the world.

Mr Smith said that although it may be an old cliche, he had regarded his time as an MP as "a labour of love".

He said: "My greatest single achievement as a backbencher and a constituency MP was to contribute to the saving of tens of thousands of lives each year by introducing risk assessments for deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in all our hospitals.

"It was not me who was responsible for this, however, but Mrs Ada Thomas of Flemingston – who came to see me ten years ago after having lost her son John in tragic circumstances.

"This is a classic example of how an ordinary citizen can use their MP to make a real difference. We did not achieve everything we wanted, but we did change the law and bring in much-needed national reforms in healthcare. There is so much an MP can achieve with a well - timed question, a debate, an official letter, a well-placed article in the press, and through effective campaigning."

Mr Smith, who in his early working life had served with the RAF and later made a career in education as a lecturer in business studies at the University of Glamorgan, succeeded Sir Raymond Gower as the Vale's MP in a 1989 by-election.

He defeated a rising Tory star Rod Richards, by polling 23,342 votes to Richards' 17,314.

But in 1992, Mr Smith's fortunes changed when he tasted a bitter defeat at the hands of Conservative Walter Sweeney by a wafer-thin 19 votes.

Undaunted, he proved to be the 'comeback kid' in 1997 and regained the seat. He was re-elected in 2001 and completed a fourth Vale election victory in 2005.

His lasting legacy looks as if it will be the £12billion Defence Technical College in St Athan. In 2007, he won the accolade Welsh Campaigner of the Year for his work in bringing the project to the Vale.

Despite facing hostile criticism from a loose alliance of green campaigners and pacifists, Mr Smith has always been bullish about what it will offer the Welsh economy.

He explained: "The St Athan project – the biggest investment ever in Wales – has the potential to completely transform the south Wales economy if handled properly. What many people may not realize is that I had campaigned non-stop to secure the future of St Athan for more than 20 years."

Mr Smith admitted that there had been depressing times in his political career as well.

"There have, of course, been low moments. Undoubtedly, losing the election in 1992 by just 19 votes was a bitter blow.

"More recently, the expenses scandal which tainted us all rocked the whole political system. I have relived those moments a million times."

NELSON MANDELA

As he bows out, Mr Smith was keen to take the opportunity to highlight what he sees as a detrimental trend in local government.

He explained: "Less well known has been my concern over the politicisation of local government officers. When first elected, I had a superb working relationship, irrespective of the political persuasion of the council, with senior officers who were professional and committed to public service.

"Over the last few years, despite their hugely inflated salaries, they couldn't reply directly to my letters. I hope my successor, whoever that may be, seeks to rectify this."

Mr Smith served as a member of the Defence Select Committee from 2005-10 which involved visiting "our magnificent servicemen and women in every battle zone in the world".

Other highlights have included meeting Nelson Mandela, who Mr Smith describes as "my hero", and riding on a steam engine down the Vale of Glamorgan line – "every little boy's dream".

Mr Smith said he wanted to record his admiration for the many local people he had met over the years who had assisted other people without thought of personal reward.

He said: "I've met many thousands of ordinary people who selflessly help others every day for little or no recognition and I have been humbled in their presence."

He added: "None of these things would have been possible for a boy from my background, if I were not an MP.

"I have had a charmed working life and it has gone in the blink of an eye.

"I thank my constituents for their trust and support over the years and I will always make myself available to my successor should they want some advice."

● *The Vale Council responded to the issue raised by Mr Smith with regard to council officers.*

Coun Gordon Kemp, Leader of the Vale Council, said: "Unfortunately, John Smith has failed to understand the changes that have taken place in local government with the introduction of the executive/cabinet system.

"Enquiries from MPs and AMs should be addressed to the responsible cabinet member and not to officers, something that all other elected representatives who write to the council do, but which John Smith has failed to grasp.

"His persistence in sending all correspondence to the chief executive has only delayed a response which cannot have been to the benefit of his constituents.

"Since becoming leader of the council I have always found the officers of the council to be totally impartial and apolitical and am sure that my predecessors found the same."

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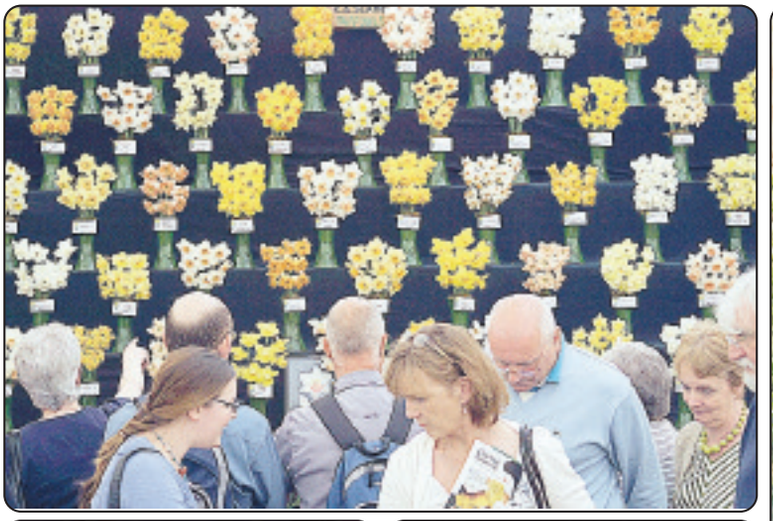
VIBRANT COLOURS MAKE CARDIFF RHS SHOW A RAVISHING FLORAL SPECTACLE



ABOVE: It was a good weekend for ice cream sales.

LEFT: 'Are you looking at my bird?'

'Anything you can do...'

WHEN Cardiff staged its own Royal Horticultural Show recently, it was a case of 'anything Chelsea can do...'

As visitors browsed through the Castle grounds, they had the chance to enjoy the vibrant colours and (sometimes) extravagant floral designs that are at the cutting edge of horticulture.

For local photographers, the event is a magnet, and ROBERT FISHER went along, on behalf of The GEM, to capture these colourful images of the day when Bute Park was transformed into a venue to rival Chelsea or Kew Gardens.

'Come and visit the beautiful Vale' – tourists are urged

Jane Hutt AM, Coun Anthony Ernest, John Winton and Mandy Davies.

VALE AM Jane Hutt opened the annual networking event of the Vale Marketing Group, chaired by Mandy Davies, who advises the Welsh Assembly Government on tourism, as well as supporting more than 100 local members running tourism businesses in the Vale.

The AM commented: "Marketing the Vale as a destination is vital to the tourism industry, but also to the prosperity of Wales as a whole.

"As we move out of recession, we can open the door to Welsh tourism as a holiday destination of choice starting with the Vale, the garden of Cardiff, the most beautiful and diverse constituency – from the attractions of Barry Island and Porthkerry Park to the wonders of the Heritage Coast and the serenity of the Vale villages and landscapes.

"I have seen much of the Vale by walking with Valeways or on family walks, and I hope we can build on the widespread love of walking with the first Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival, which takes place over the weekend of May 14-16.

"Looking at recent tourism statistics for the Vale, the spend per night ihere is higher than the rest of Wales, and the UK tourism share by region puts Wales higher than the south east or south west of England.

"The message is clear and strong – visit and holiday in the Vale!"

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The 21st Century Guide to Choosing a Divorce Lawyer

Choosing a family lawyer can be a daunting task. Before you reach for the Yellow Pages, **Kathryn McTaggart of Woolley & Co** family law specialists has a few tips to ensure that you find the best lawyer for you and your family.

Do you like them?

Most family lawyers are happy to have a short consultation with you free of charge. All should at least offer a telephone chat so you can get an idea of the type of person you will be dealing with.

You will need to work closely with your family lawyer, trust his or her judgement and guidance at times of deep emotional stress and confide information that you may not have even told your family and close friends. The best representation always comes with a relationship of mutual trust and respect. If you don't like them, it is not going to work. You will not get the answers to all your legal problems in 30 minutes but you will get the opportunity to 'interview' your lawyer.

How much will it cost you?

Rates will vary from firm to firm. As in life, you generally get what you pay for. Don't be afraid to ask questions about fees and how payments can be made. For example, like Woolley & Co, do they offer fixed fees or standing order payments to help you budget? Are there things you can do yourself to keep costs down? Who will be dealing with your case? It is sensible for routine tasks to be undertaken by a more junior lawyer (provided it is at a lower hourly rate) but it can be very disheartening to develop a relationship with your lawyer at a meeting only to find out later that your case is being dealt with by another member of the team. Ask what procedures are in place if you have queries about invoices. No one should be charged for wanting to know how their bill has arisen.

Are they any good?

Family law is constantly evolving and with a specialist practitioner you can ensure that he or she is not just on top of the law but also experienced in dealing with the complex emotional and practical problems that come with a separation. Asking for recommendations from family and friends can be a great way to find the right person but, if it's not possible, get online and look for lawyers like Kathryn who display client testimonials. It will give you a great insight into how they work.

Trust your own judgement

Do you have confidence he or she will be firm when necessary? Does he or she understand your values and priorities? Will he or she keep you focused on the future or just write letters that summarise your anger and disappointment? Will he or she take some of the worry out of making difficult decisions for you and your family? After all, you are paying good money for the service so it should be as pain free as possible.

Need help?

Kathryn offers a free half hour consultation – a perfect opportunity for you to decide whether you can work together.

Kathryn McTaggart is an experienced family solicitor based in South Wales. As well as being a fully qualified solicitor Kathryn is a trained Collaborative Lawyer.

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NEWS FROM POSITIVE IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

And now for something completely different..!

I HAVE often remarked, in these little bulletins, on what a friendly band Positive Image Photographic Society is.

As a relatively new member (this is only my second season with PIPS), I was quite surprised when our programme secretary, Bernard Brown, offered me the opportunity to take a slot as the speaker for the last evening of this season, but that is typical of this friendly little group.

There is nothing quite like having a good laugh with a bunch of like-minded friends and on April 15 I had a ball – we all had a ball!

When I first moved to Barry, I started taking photographs of details of buildings we pass regularly.

The town is blessed with some wonderful architecture. I was reworking a quiz I devised when I lived in Swansea and which actually raised a significant amount for local charities.

With the advent of digital photography – and its freedom from the expense of buying film – I could go to town on the new version of 'How Well Do You Know Barry?'

I had great fun out and about taking the pictures for a special version for 'PIPS' – I have to admit, a more difficult version, given that photographers are supposed to be more observant!

I had even more fun eavesdropping on the deliberations of the teams trying to identify landmarks, buildings, clocks, places of worship, and pub signs from cryptic details.

It was obvious from the banter that ensued, that my fellow members were having as much fun as I was and we finished the 2009-2010 season having a good laugh.

At the end of the night, it was life president, Bernard Brown, who surprised us all, by having the most right answers. Especially as he was a team of one because he came in late, having slipped out to the shop for milk for the coffee.

Bernard not only made the highest score but, having failed to recognise a single pub sign, identified every single place of worship – his mother would be so proud!

Positive Image Photographic Society will be in recess for the summer. New members will be sure of a very warm welcome in September when we will be meeting again at 7.30pm on alternative Thursday evenings at St Baruc's Church, Phyllis Street, Barry Island.

Further details of the society are on our website at www.positiveimagebarry.org.uk. The date of our first meeting in September and details of the 2010-11 season's programme will be posted on the website as soon as they are available.

DAVID ALEXANDER

St Helen's Church, Wyndham Street.

William IV.

Sir Samuel Romilly

Tabernacle Welsh congregational on King's Square.

Volunteers

THERE will be a Vale Volunteer Bureau outreach surgery at Llantwit Major library on Monday, May 10 from 10am-12pm with the Community Transport Association.

For further information, contact Joe on 01446 421782 or visit www.vvb.org.uk

Fibromyalgia Support

THE Vale of Glamorgan Fibromyalgia Support Group monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11.

Contact group leader Barbara Clissett on 0845 345 5813 for further details. Calls are charged at standard rate.

Youth orchestras are on the move

TWO established youth orchestras are moving to the Vale to give more talent in the area the opportunity to make great music.

Starting yesterday (Wednesday) the Cardiff and Vale Music Service (CAVMS) orchestras will be rehearsing in St Cyres Comprehensive School, Penarth.

Previously based at the Cathedral School, Llandaff, these talented young orchestras will be welcomed to their new home by conductor Grant Llewellyn. Grant is a local resident (although he does the bulk of his work in the USA) and will be taking both senior and training orchestras for a special rehearsal later this term.

New members are welcome and can have the first term free! Fees (normally £40 per term) will be waived for any young musicians who wants to give it a try. The training orchestra welcomes all students with grades 1 to 4 without audition. The senior orchestra accepts students of approximately grade 5 and above by audition.

The senior orchestra has a regular exchange programme with a school in Chicago. They will be hosting them next Easter and making their fourth visit to Chicago during the Easter break of 2012.

In addition, regular local concerts are performed in venues such as St David's Hall and the Coal Exchange.

For more information, telephone 02920 891231 or visit www.cavmsorchestras.co.uk.

Vale stats

A NEW way to access a range of statistics and indicators across the Vale has been launched by the Local Government Data Unit.

InfoBaseVale is a new website that gives easy access to a wide range of statistics and indicators for each area within the Vale on themes including people, economy, education, health, housing and crime. InfoBaseVale is developed, supported and hosted by the Local Government Data Unit, Wales.

See more at http://vale.infobasecymru.net/

TY HAFAN'S APPEAL FOR SPARE PLANTS

LAST year, for the first time, Ty Hafan, the family hospice for young lives, ran a gardening stall at its popular fun day which proved to be a huge success.

Sales amounted to just over £700, which gave a real boost to funds raised on the day.

Carol Jenkins from Ty Hafan, said: "The children and parents spent many a happy hour last year planting up the hanging baskets and pots which were then sold on the day.

"This year, we will have been unable to grow our own bedding plants and shrubs, so we are asking if keen local gardeners have a few plants to spare that they could donate for the fundraising effort."

A keen gardener herself, Carol is aware that many gardeners tend to grow and pot more plants than they actually need, so this year you could help to raise funds and make a difference to the lives of children and families who use Ty Hafan.

Anyone interested should telephone Carol on 029 2053 2200 or drop them in to the hospice on Hayes Road, Sully.

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Business as usual as Wales breaks new ground in the drive for better services

ASSEMBLY NOTES

by ***Jane Hutt AM*** **(Minister for Business and Budget)**

AS Assembly Government business continues throughout the general election campaign, there are yet more policy developments which are receiving support, such as the action promoted last week by the Health Minister to address the problems caused by alcohol misuse and abuse.

This can blight the lives of young people, as well as causing many problems from nuisance to violence both domestic and in the street.

I have been responding to many calls for assistance with neighbourhood nuisance of this kind, which can get worse as the weather gets better and as people head out to enjoy the sunshine which can be great, but very difficult for the local community if too much alcohol accompanies the outings.

We are funding the Community Safety partnerships to address these problems and 'alcohol free' zones in parks and in open spaces are proving effective. We need to listen to residents about the problems they are dealing with often at the weekends and during holiday periods.

Our children and young people are a credit to us and we are investing in their future with the announcement last week by the Deputy Minister for Science, Innovation and Skills of the establishment of a National Science Academy. This will promote the take-up of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM subjects) to ensure that our young people are well equipped to gain the skills and qualifications we need in the Welsh economy and support the industries and technology of tomorrow.

The Academy will focus on education in STEM subjects from the early years through to further and higher education, and will be guided by our first Chief Scientific Adviser for Wales, Professor John Harries from Imperial College, London.

Techniquest will play a part, as will the STEM champions, who are all eminent in the STEM areas of research and industry, with a new STEM mentor service to support these champions in playing their role to promote an interest in science at every level of education, as well as in the community.

The statement issued by the Minister highlighted the exciting role the new National Science Academy will play in:

- promoting a positive image of STEM subjects to the public.
- highlighting Welsh successes and leading edge research capability.
- promoting good practice via case studies.
- providing a conduit for reliable learning and careers information.

We need to develop these skills, particularly in technology, as digital technology is already revolutionising the way we handle day-to-day dealings with banks, travel, retail – as well as our own personal communications.

We need to be up-to-date in the same way with our public services and we are developing a new Welsh Public Service ICT Strategy to make sure we can do this. 'My Health on Line' is now developing to enable patients to book appointments with their GPs and order repeat prescriptions on line.

We also need to make sure that this does not exclude people who are not 'on line' and do not have access to their own home computers, by providing more public access points such as the library facilities in King Square, Barry, which has an excellent citizen take-up.

Last week, I announced a new round of 'Invest to Save' projects which moves Wales further on in our 'efficiency and innovation drive'. One of the successful projects to receive investment was the world leading Public Sector Broadband Aggregation Network (PSBA) by assisting up to 1,000 new public sector connections to the network and providing access to broadband, voice, video and data services at a reduced cost – typically, a reduction of around 20 per cent in ongoing costs.

We are also pressing ahead with the opportunities for the public sector to increase the take-up of xchangewales 'procure to pay' using ICT to improve collaborative procurement for our public services.

This will also benefit the private sector, particularly SMEs in Wales.

NEWS FROM PENARTH AND DISTRICT RAMBLERS

Parc le Breos, and a 3,500-year-old burial chamber...

TWELVE walkers joined Joy, Bracken and Nick for a trip down to Parkmill on Gower where the Le Breos family, who were granted sovereignty of Gower by King John in 1203, established their estate.

Parc le Breos is a deer park of around 500 acres on land to the west of Parkmill. It was used for deer hunting and military training and the water-powered corn and saw mill at the nearby Heritage Centre was part of the development.

It was a toll mill and local farmers were ordered to bring their corn for grinding and then were expected to pay dues to the estate.

The group crossed the river bridge and climbed through woods that were carpeted with delicate wood anemones, but the expected wild garlic was still in tight bud following the cold winter that has delayed spring flowers.

Emerging onto a lane, they climbed steeply and followed a bridleway near the golf course to Southgate where a path around the school led them through fields to eventually emerge near the coast.

Walking through Southgate, they crossed Pennard Burrows golf course and a short climb led them to the ruins of Pennard Castle.

The castle, perched on the cliff edge high above the Pennard Pill River, usually has gorgeous views across Three Cliff Bay and Penmaen. However, a thick sea mist was rolling in and totally obscured views.

Morning coffee was taken inside the ruins of this 12th century limestone and reddish coloured sandstone castle that was abandoned in the 14th century because it was overpowered with sand.

Then, slithering down a huge sandy dune, the group made their way across Three Cliff Bay and the Pennard Pill by means of stepping stones, probably a relic of a clapper style bridge constructed initially by the Normans.

A steep climb up through a primrose-covered narrow sandy path led them to Penmaen Burrows and a pleasant walk along the cliff top with a cooling breeze, where the lovely Oxwich Bay was still under the mist, before the descent to Nicholaston Burrows.

Entering Nicholaston Woods, they stopped for a late lunch on a bridge that crosses the Nicholaston Pill River before continuing through this ancient woodland where the pretty white flowers of the wild garlic paved the edges of the path and filled the air with its scent.

A short road climb led them to the hamlet of Perriswood which nestles into the side of Cefn Bryn, the five-mile old red sandstone ridge, known as the backbone of Gower.

A gradual and easy climb up Cefn Bryn over grassy common land led them to the highest part of their route at 186-metres (609 feet).

By now the mist was beginning to clear slightly, affording them their first views of Oxwich and Three Cliff Bay as they walked the ridge towards Penmaen, before descending and following a track that led to woodland at the rear of Parc le Breos.

Entering the flat valley on their way back, the group made their way past Parc le Breos burial tomb. This ancient roofless partly restored burial chamber dates back to 3,500BC and has a central passage with two pairs of chambers. It was discovered in 1869 when workmen were digging in the area for road stone, and various items of pottery and animal and human skulls were later excavated.

On May 8, meet at 9am at the Barry Waterfront for a 7-8-mile moderate walk at Southerndown and Castle-upon-Alun; contact Val W. on 01446 734925.

On May 13, the popular summer evening walks begin. Meet at 7pm at All Saints Church, Park Road, Barry for a 3-mile easy walk in the Porthkerry area; contact Val W. on 01446 734925.

Wear suitable clothing, preferably boots and carry waterproofs, food and drinks. Some degree of fitness is required and if you are in any doubt, then please contact the walk leader for advice. For other groups' walk log onto www.ramblers.org.uk

Rucksack badges, programmes and membership advice can be obtained from Pam on 029 2021 9102. **JOY STRANGWARD**

AM discovers dream charity – *next door!*

The AM with Martin Harris of Follow your Dreams.

WHEN Vale AM, Jane Hutt, met Martin Harris at his High Street office in Barry, she discovered an amazing charity operating right on her doorstep.

The 'Follow your Dreams' charity raises awareness as well as funding and sponsorship for people with learning disabilities. The charity sponsors individuals to take part in the Special Olympics, as well as other local training and competitions in sport and drama.

"I was particularly impressed with the support given by local businesses to the 'Follow your Dreams' charity to help empower young people with learning disabilities to reach their full potential in the arts, drama, music and sport," the AM reported.

Follow your Dreams is at 26 High Street, Barry CF62 7EB (telephone 01446 739452).

Cycle ride for charity

Barry College team getting ready for the Barnardo's South Wales on Your Bike ride. Come the day, they will all have bikes.

TEN students and staff from Barry College will take part in Barnardo's 38-mile sponsored On Your Bike ride, through the Vale of Glamorgan on May 16.

Barry College assistant head of construction David Davies, wood trades tutor Ken Allen, brickwork lecturer Paul Sebburn, part-time brickwork lecturer and Sue James, who works in the college coffee shop, will be joined by five construction students.

CCTV ARRESTs

CCTV operated by the Safer Vale Partnership, assisted with two arrests in the week ending May 2.

It contacted the police on eight occasions, with two arrests made for theft at Holton Road on May 1.

Rhoose Lifeguards in 82-mile marathon swim

ON April 27, the Rhoose Surf Life Saving Club held an all-night sponsored swim in the swimming pool at the Fontygary Leisure Complex, Rhoose.

The swim was started at 9pm by the Nipper section of the club. They were joined later by members of the junior section and the two teams swam alternately through the night.

A small team of Masters' members swam between 1am and 2am, giving the younger members time to eat and rest. The Nipper Section took over the swim on Sunday morning until 9am.

A massive 5,300 lengths (just over 82 miles) were completed, a fantastic achievement.

Alan Wadey swam 448 lengths throughout the night, and Miff Connelly swam 302 lengths!

Thank you to the coaches and members of the Rhoose Lifeguards, who gave up their Saturday night/Sunday morning to keep watch over the swimmers.

A big thank you to the Fontygary complex

and staff for their continued support of the Rhoose Lifeguard Club in allowing us to use the pool overnight and to everyone who kindly sponsored the children.

The final figure raised will be published once all the forms are collected.

It is hoped that much-needed equipment can be purchased for the training of the young lifeguards of the future to help keep our beaches safe.

ELAINE EDGERTON

ABOVE:
The young members of the Rhoose Surf Life Saving Club swam overnight to raise funds to pay for new equipment.

ABOVE:
One of the young swimmers who took part in the all-night sponsored swim puts in a big effort at Fontygary Leisure Complex,

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

In Business Update

Get those creative juices flowing!

FOR the third year running, the VWBN goes walkabout!

Walking and talking get the creative juices flowing and also release 'happy endorphins'. It's a great way to network, too!

The walk will be short and not strenuous, taking in one of the Vale's best kept secrets – the Aberthaw nature reserve.

We start and finish at the lovely Blue Anchor Inn.

Walking is not compulsory – and you won't be alone if you decide to relax and network in the comfort of the Blue Anchor.

So, if you are a bit stuck for the next inspired business decision, put on your trainers and join us for a very relaxed and different sort of networking evening!

Please email members@vwbn.org.uk for more information and to book.

Guests and new members are very welcome. This event is free!

For more information about the benefits of networking and joining the VWBN, please visit www.vwbn.co.uk

Vale Women's Business Network

Walk, Talk and Network for FREE!

Wednesday, 19th May 2010

at The Blue Anchor Inn, East Aberthaw, Vale of Glamorgan.

From 6pm onwards.
Guests and non-members are most welcome!
Please e-mail members@vwbn.org.uk to book

www.vwbn.org.uk

Visitors feel the Forse...

THE under-13 Vale Wanderers played their last 15-a-side game of the season at The Rec against a well-organised touring side from Longlevens, Gloucester.

The visitors opened the scoring after 10 minutes when some sloppy defending allowed a forwards try, which went un-converted.

Longlevens failed to use the elements and spent the next 15 minutes in their own 22, defending some strong runs from the Wanderers forwards, again led by the outstanding Rhys Forse.

Eventually the pressure told and outstanding No 10 Theo Richards went over wide out to bring the scores level. He converted his own try with a very tough kick directly in to the wind.

From the re-start, the home team froze and allowed the visitors No 8 to collect the loose ball and score a converted try under the posts. The Wanderers came straight back at Longlevens and were unlucky not to reply.

However, a knock on deep in the visitors' 22 led to a scrum from which the visitors No 8 picked up and went the length of the field for a fine solo try. As the half time whistle went, Longlevens led 17-7.

The second half was a much closer affair, with only one try coming from the visitors. The Wanderers' coaches took the opportunity to introduce their massed replacements to the fray. Lewis Bracher, Gareth Jones, Elliot Ponting and Llantwit under-12s fly-half Iestyn Jones all came on to replace key players and all impressed in the closing stages.

The Wanderers spent long periods of time in the Longlevens 22, but once again poor options and superb defence meant that the visitors did not concede in the second half. Final score, Vale Wanderers 7 Longlevens 22.

The Vale Wanderers only came together this season, made up of boys from Llantwit Major, Dinas Powys and Sully.

The team have worked extremely hard and can look forward to next season with a great deal of optimism.

The coaching team would like to thank the players and parents for all their encouragement and support.

TJ

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Fresh produce supply unaffected by air shutdown

THE recent air shutdown may lead to a "scarcity of some items on the shelves" according to the Freight Industry Association, as thousands of tonnes of fresh produce rotted and was unable to reach its destination, causing serious problems for growers and works overseas.

This demonstrates the unsustainable nature of our food supply, according to award-winning local vegbox company Riverford Organic.

"It seems mad that we should rely on air freight to get food onto our plates and that chaos shows just how unsustainable the food distribution chain is," said Chris and Alison Moruzzi, who deliver Riverford vegboxes to families in the Port Talbot, Bridgend and Vale areas.

"We have a policy of never air freighting so any shutdown won't affect availability for our customers.

"We can grow so much in this country, with veg like purple sprouting broccoli, cauliflower, spring onions, leeks and rhubarb in season right now. It just doesn't make sense that we should fly in baby sweetcorn and pineapple chunks from around the world to feed ourselves.

"We work closely with some growers overseas who provide us with things like bananas and oranges that don't grow here, and because we import the produce by sea, our growers won't be vulnerable to any problems of waste and rotting produce."

They suggest that an ideal solution would be to consider a local vegbox scheme. "If you're not green-fingered yourself, now is a good opportunity to find a local vegbox scheme that grows its own instead. With beautiful UK asparagus just coming into season, will you really miss baby sweetcorn anyway?"

Riverford has never air freighted any produce and works with overseas growers over the long term to protect them from the vulnerabilities of the global distribution chain.

riverford veg heroes

The Natural and Organic Awards 2009

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Jeff Lloyd Solicitors offer 'a friendly approach to issues of law'

ESTABLISHED in Barry since 1979, Jeff Lloyd Solicitors is a general practice with an emphasis on conveyancing, probate, lasting power of attorney, wills and family.

A spokesman explained: "We have aimed to maintain our friendly approach to law, while adopting a fast and efficient method of service.

"We place a heavy emphasis on personal service, whether in the purchase of a property or during difficult family cases.

"Mr Lloyd is happy to make home visits at no extra cost and we do not normally charge for a first interview.

"We are members of the Law Society Family Law Panel and very experienced property and probate solicitors. We are here to help."

Call into 87a Holton Road, Barry, or telephone 01446 741919.

'You focus on the business, we focus on the numbers'

AT WALDEN Accountancy we understand how important it is for you to be able to focus on your business, especially when times are tough.

You need to know how your business is doing and be able to meet your filing deadlines for business tax, VAT and PAYE matters, but your time is limited and you need to be cost-effective.

Our local Vale-based practice is here to help you and your business.

We are here to support you with a reliable, efficient and friendly service that can help you make the most of your resources.

Whatever your accounting requirements, we tailor our service to suit your needs.

Call us now for a free initial consultation and see how we can help you. Contact Beth Walden on 01446 772860, or mobile 07769 141268.

Feed your spirit, feed your soul

AT The Creative Well, you can explore your creativity through intuitive painting workshops, even if you've always thought you haven't an artistic bone in your body!

Learn to paint your emotional landscapes, and heighten your powers of perception and imagination.

Give yourself time to play deeply in a non-judgmental environment, gain more self-expression, find your unique voice, and get back in touch with your authentic 'self'.

The practice of intuitive painting uses the creative proceed as a means of delving into thoughts and feelings that haven't formed verbally.

The power of the painting lies in the process, not the result.

All materials are provided, and no artistic experience or training is necessary.

Call 07748 627179 or visit for more information.

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WELSH POINT-TO-POINT GRAND NATIONAL HELD AT BONVILSTON IS A REAL 'CRACKER'

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

A BUMPER crowd attended the Pentyrch Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases at Redlands Farm, Bonvilston, and the feature 'Welsh Point-To-Point Grand National' was a cracker with four of the eight starters still in with a chance two fences from the finish.

It was first held in 1983, when it was won by the legendary John Llewellyn on *Mr Moneybags* and he won it again in 1986 on *Team*.

The race has been won by many well-known riders and these include Paul Hamer, who won it a record four times. Sam Waley Cohen was successful on *Down* in 2002, 2003 and 2004, and Tim Jones, Evan Williams, Jamie Jukes, Jonathan Tudor, Rhys Hughes and John Mathias were other winners.

Last year's winner, *Misamon*, ridden by John Mathias, and the locally-trained *Kings Euro*, partnered by Tom David, went off at breakneck speed and looked to have the race between them.

However, five fences from home, *Galtee View* (Joseph Williams) and *Esters Boy* (Mike Byrne) started to get in on the act and by the time the penultimate fence was reached, all four of those mentioned were still in with a chance.

However, it was Joan Williams's 12-year-old *Galtee View* which jumped the last just in front and who went on to win by two lengths from *Kings Euro*, with *Esters Boy* a short head away in third place.

Galtee View, a 12-1 outsider, and his young rider, returned to the unsaddling enclosure to the loudest cheers of the day. Joseph's mother and father both rode winners between-the-flags. Unfortunately, Joseph, who was chalking-up his second winner (his first had been on *Galtee View* earlier this season) was soon brought back down to earth when in the very next race he took a first fence fall from *Power King*!

Pembrokeshire riders Nathan Deakin and John Mathias both rode doubles.

Nathan (17), who was riding his first ever double, won with *Grey Kid* (novice riders) and *Hocinail* (young horse maiden), and John won with *Balearic Star* (confined) and *Its Danny Boy* (restricted). Mathias, who brought his seasonal tally of wins to 25, was full of praise for the organisers "for watering the course and making it safe".

Grey Kid, who was landing a three-timer, made most of the running to win by 12 lengths from *Twilight Dancer*, who was finishing in the runner-up's spot for the seventh time in its last 10 races, and *Hockinail* won by 20 lengths from *Tachbury*.

The French-bred *Hocinail* gave former National Hunt jockey Paul Goldsworthy his first win as an owner/trainer.

Dewi Lewis's *Balearic Star* won by three parts of a length from *Micks Prospect* after leading two out and *Its Danny Boy*, owned and trained by David Brace, jumped the last in front to score by five lengths from the favourite *Frenchfurze Lad*.

In a match for the members' race, David Davies's *West Bay*, confidently ridden by David Prichard (18), outjumped the long-odds-on *Oscarwood* to win by a distance.

The fastest winner of the day was *Isle Of Inishmore* who, under Tom David, came home an eight lengths winner of the aged maiden. Owned by Somerset farmers Jeff and Rachel Frost, and trained locally by Abbi Vaughan, this seven-year-old bay gelding won by eight lengths from *Nosler*.

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

Other pictures are available from this event.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:
e-mail glynevans01@tiscali.co.uk
telephone 01446 773225.
Now open in the Wool Barn, Verity's Court, Cowbridge.

The V-POD youth bus takes to the streets

LEFT: Young people in the area have played a crucial role with some fresh ideas.

V-POD is the latest multimedia youth provision running pilot activities within the Vale.

The V-POD is a single-decker bus specially converted to deliver activities and services for young people.

It is operated by Vibe Experience Ltd, a local voluntary youth organisation in partnership with the council's Youth Service and will be stopping at locations across the Vale and all young people are welcome.

On board are i-mac computers, internet, Xbox, PS3s, Wii, DJ mixing decks, Bose surround sound, plasma screens, DVD player, disco lighting, chillout area and much more!

The V-POD can park up in lots of different locations, especially in areas where there is no other youth provision or activities.

There will be professional tutors running creative, multimedia, music workshops, as well as qualified youth workers to provide information and activities on youth issues, such as good citizenship, community respect, healthy lifestyles and anti-social behaviour.

Sy Joshua of the Vale youth service said: "We aim to use the V-POD as a platform to complement the existing youth provision and undertake informal activities and workshops in areas of little or no youth provision during school holidays and weekends.

"We have now entered the pre-launch phase, trialling operations and organising previews. We aim to launch the V-POD in June 2010, as we are still waiting to hear about funding applications which will support its operation."

Young people have been heavily involved throughout the development of the project. More than 2,000 young people in the Vale have helped to provide ideas and concepts for the overall design and functionality of the V-POD.

Dominique Le Sauteur of Vibe Experience said: "It's fantastic to see the V-POD piloting activities for young people as part of the pre-launch plan.

" The project has taken a number of years of research, planning and consultation, and young people in the Vale have played a huge role."

LEFT: The specially adapted V-POD bus takes to the streets.

Valeways highlights the walking festival

THE Millennium Heritage Trail is a 63-mile long trail created by Valeways, that takes in 6,000 years of beauty, culture and history in the picturesque Vale.

As part of the walking festival, two treks are available that sample this trail.

On Saturday, May 15, at 10 am, there is an 11-mile walk covering the first stages of the Millennium Heritage Trail to St Nicholas, before heading to St Georges and crossing the River Ely back to St Fagans.

The route takes in delightful villages, passes through a battlefield site, holy well, ancient church, ruined castle and one of Wales' famous prehistoric sites in Tinkinswood burial chamber.

On Sunday, May 16, at 10 am, there is a seven-mile walk in what is known locally as the 'Border Vale,' an area that extends from the Vale into Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Most of the walk is through elevated limestone country of considerable attractiveness.

The walkers will pass close to two churches, two historic houses, walk through interesting grounds and around the charming Talygarn Lake with its abundant wild fowl.

The return journey wends its way through woodland and open fields.

Booking is essential.

Visit www.valeofglamorganwalkingfestival.org.uk for the full programme and online booking.

Phone bookings and enquiries can be made by calling Valeways on 01446 749000 (Monday - Thursday, 9am-1pm).

PACT meetings

DYFAN PACT, Barry Comprehensive School, May 10 at 6pm.
BARUC PACT, Barry Island Community Centre, May 12, at 7pm.
CADOC PACT, Palmerston Community Centre, May 12, at 7pm.
ST ATHAN PACT, The Gathering Place, May 11 at 7.30pm.
PENLLYN Coffee & Chat meeting, The Red Fox, Penllyn, May 12 at 11am.
PENDOYLAN Community Council meeting, Pendoylan School, May 13 at 7.45pm.
PLYMOUTH PACT surgery, Brockhill Way, next to the Spar, May 20 between 2pm and 4pm.

Roadworks weekly report

Plassey Street, junctions with Glebe Street, Ludlow land, Ludlow Street and Arcott Street, Penarth – *carriageway width restrictions.*
Pontypridd Street - junction with Mount Pleasant – *footway restriction.*
Gladstone Road Bridge to the Waterfront – *temporary traffic control.*
Windsor Road, near junction with Bridge Street, Penarth – *temporary traffic control.*
Windsor Road, junction with Plassey Street, Penarth – *traffic management.*
A4055, Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys near Cadoxton River Bridge – *temporary traffic control.*

Dancing to help the children with cancer

YOUNG dancers from YDance joined CLIC Sargent's nationwide campaign, supported by the Royal Academy of Dance street dance competition while raising money for children with cancer.

Practice-a-thon Dance, is a the national fundraising initiative run by children's cancer charity, CLIC Sargent, which sees students getting sponsored to dance, or holding their own dance events.

Emma Mallam, Dance Co-ordinator of Motion Control Dance Programme said: "We're delighted to be supporting Practice-a-thon Dance. The students have really got behind the idea and are very enthused about practising.

"By doing what they love best, they're not only improving their dance skills, but they're also helping children and young people with cancer".

HISTORY COMES ALIVE FOR WHITSUN VISITORS TO MARGAM COUNTRY PARK

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

Other pictures are available from this event.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:
e-mail glynevans01@tiscali.co.uk
telephone 01446 773225.
Now open in the Wool Barn, Verity's Court, Cowbridge.

MARGAM COUNTRY PARK in Port Talbot hosted a 'Fortress Wales' event over the Whitsun Bank Holiday, May 2-3.

It gave visitors a chance to step back in time and see how people lived – and fought – in ages past.

Re-enactment groups attending the show included the Western Front and the Confederate and Union Re-enactment Society.

People were also able to browse the trade stands and craft stalls that were on site.

Out and About with The GEM

'Fabulous' acts lined up for the Mount Sorrel

THE Best Western Mount Sorrel Hotel in Barry is gearing up for the summer with some fabulous acts to cheer everyone up and get people into the party mood.

A spokeswoman said: "On May 15, we have a Neil Diamond night, with a Stars in Your Eyes winner.

"It will be a high quality, entertaining evening with all Neil Diamond's top hits such as *Sweet Caroline*, *Love on the Rocks*, *Forever in Blue Jeans* and *I'm a Believer*.

"There will be a great spread laid on – and people could arrange a surprise birthday party for a family member or loved one, with an overnight stay for £30 for ticket holders.

"If people stay for the night, it saves them a taxi ride home and we even throw in a swimming pool pass so people can have an invigorating swim after the party the night before.

"Future acts will be a Beach Boys evening and indoor barbecue, Boogie Nights with a 70s themed menu – so get your flares out of the attic – and coming soon the magic of a Freddie Mercury tribute night."

For more information about any of the summer events at Mount Sorrel, call 01446 740069 or go to www.bw-mountsorrel-hotel.co.uk.

Bears on alert for parachute jump

St Cadoc's Church (Old village), Cadoxton, Barry is once again holding a sponsored Teddy Bear parachute jump on Sunday, May 23, at 2pm.

Each participating bear will undergo a medical in the state of the art first aid tent prior to their jump to ensure they are fit to fly, and on safe landing will be awarded a well deserved certificate of bravery.

All parachutes are provided. There will be a prize for the best dressed child's and adult's bear. So if you have a bear that would dare, sponsor forms are now available from St Cadoc's (Old Village) church, Cadoxton, Barry, or telephone 749689. The event will also include a barbeque.

Shoebox

THE parishioners of St Cadoc's and St Mary's churches take part in the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas child shoebox appeal, and last year were able to send more than 500 gift filled shoeboxes to needy children in Eastern Europe.

For some this would be the only gift received at Christmas time. The hope is to raise as much money as possible to enable parishioners to reach even more children this Christmas.

All proceeds from this event are in aid of the Operation Christmas child shoebox appeal.

SHIRLEY POWELL

Dyspraxia support

THE next meeting of the Vale Dyspraxia Support Group at 7.30 pm IS on Monday, May 10, in the Mary Lennox Room, Barry Hospital, Colcot Road, Barry.

There will be a presentation on the statementing process.

The Vale Dyspraxia Support Group provides support for children with dyspraxia and their families. The group helps to liaise with education authorities and the Welsh Assembly. It is running a laptop project to support pupils with dyspraxia.

Families (both parents and children) of young people with dyspraxia and related conditions (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD, Aspergers) are welcome.

Player appeal

IF you are currently in school year-6 and would like to play football next season, Rhoose Football Club would be delighted to hear from you, as the club does not have a big enough squad to progress to junior football.

If you would like more information, contact the secretary (Mark Bartlett) on 01446 710834 or 07504214826.

Heritage Centre Coalition appear at 'Fortress Wales'

ABOVE: Alun Robertson of the VHCC chatting to members of the public (see more pictures on pages 16 and 18).

MEMBERS of the group lobbying for a Heritage Centre in the Vale of Glamorgan were delighted with the level of response to their free World War One family history research facility which they offered last weekend at 'Fortress Wales' – the multi-period re-enactment event staged at Margam Park.

Spokesman Dr Jonathan Hicks said that the coalition was inundated with request for information on relatives who served during the Great War.

Dr Hicks added: "The level of interest in researching family history is extremely high. We were busy all day and would like to thank the public for their patience in waiting their turn to be seen.

"We hope to stage a similar facility at Armed Forces Day at the Pier Head building in Cardiff Bay next month."

Guild workshop

THE Glamorgan Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers will hold a self-help workshop on spinning, weaving and braidmaking on May 8 in the Scout Hall, Dinas Powys (10am - 4pm).

For further details, ring Kirsten Gable on 01443 650336.

Councillors' surgery

RESIDENTS are invited to a surgery to discuss any concerns or issues.

Plaid councillors Caroline Turner and Barry Shaw will be joined by Keith Stockdale at Holton Primary School, Pyke Street, Barry from 11am to 12 midday this Saturday, May 8.

No appointments are necessary.

Floral Society

ON May 11, Bary Floral Society will hold a demonstration at St Nicholas Hall, Barry, entitled 'Spring Sunshine' by Mrs Kath Lee of Whitland.

Commencing at 2.15pm. New members are always welcome.

International polo returns to Fonmon...

ST David's Polo Club is delighted to be returning to Fonmon Castle on June 27 for the third year, courtesy of Sir Brooke Boothby, and the club is raising the bar by introducing a Welsh Polo team recognised by the Hurlingham Polo Association, to play an international game against Italy (sponsored by Microsoft).

The engine of the Wales team will be two top professional players, brothers Richard and Andrew Blake -Thomas, supported by amateur players Stuart Leigh-Davies and Microsoft's Ricky Cooper, who will be flying in from New York to play.

All players qualify due to Welsh parentage, and with Sir Brooke's support the club plans to make Fonmon Castle the home of Welsh Polo for the foreseeable future.

Italy will be a strong team, as the majority of its players will be South American players holding Italian passports. They are seeking revenge for the pain the Wales rugby team has inflicted over the years.

A club spokesman said: "With Cardiff Castle promoting its own Arena Polo event on the same day, we hope we can rely on strong support from the Vale to promote the game as it should be played, and establish its roots in the countryside.

Ticket prices start at £30 for a car and all passengers, within a picnic area on the north side of the ground with direct parking onto the ground.

Childrenadnu free of charge but with a warning that they must be under control, as polo can be a dangerous game and we would suggest the lowest age to be seven years.

Hospitably and self-catering units on the south side of the field, prices can be found at www.stdavidspolo.co.uk (sorry no children in this area).

Please come and enjoy a sporting day with some added 'dolce vita'.

We are supporting the Prince's Trust Cymru."

SCALLYWAGS of Cowbridge

21st Anniversary Competition
(GEM 1st April edition)
3 Lucky Winners receive £50 Gift Vouchers
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Mrs I Daniels of Cowbridge
Mrs K Rowe of Porthcawl
Thank you to everyone who entered

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Saturday 8th May
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Superhero Aiden is Spiderboy star for the day!

AIDEN ADAMS, aged five, from Barry Island, enjoyed an action-packed adventure when he had his wish granted to be 'Spiderman' for the day.

His wish was made possible courtesy of Make-A-Wish Foundation UK, the charity that grants young people fighting life-threatening illnesses a wish of their choice.

Aiden, who is living with congenital heart disease, is a huge fan of Spiderman and it was his wish to become Spiderman for the day and climb walls and have a web that he could fire at baddies. When Make-A-Wish heard about Aiden, they were only to delighted to make his wish come true.

Aiden's superhero wish was split into two days – the first where he was filmed in a 'Spiderman' movie, and the second where he attended the premiere of the movie he had appeared in with his family and friends to watch his heroic performance as Spiderman.

ABOVE: Aidan pictured with Spiderman

For the filming on April 18, 2009, Aiden was whisked away in a luxury limousine, along with mum Eve, dad Craig, brother Lewis and sister Rosie – and taken to the Omni TV Studios in Cardiff.

A studio was especially designed for Aiden, complete with green painted floor, giant screen, and special effects.

There were also actors playing 'baddies' for Spiderman to catch, a flight co-ordinator, in order to help 'Spiderman' climb walls, and a film crew to film '*Spiderboy – the Movie*'.

Aiden had a fantastic time making the film with his brother and sister; and in true film-star style, even had his own dressing room.

The final part of Aiden's wish happened on May 23 last year which was the film's glitzy premiere.

Aiden and his family were collected from their home in a stretch limousine in true Hollywood style and taken to the Odeon Cinema in Cardiff.

On arrival, Aiden was given the full red carpet treatment, with paparazzi photographing him as he stepped out from the car onto the red carpet.

It was the first time that Aiden and his family had viewed the film and Aiden could hardly contain his excitement.

As a special guest at the premiere, Aiden's special superhero, Spiderman, was there to greet him on the red carpet and present him with an award for 'Best Actor' after the film screening.

Aiden's mother, Eve said: "The wish was one of the best times of our lives.

"The process from start to finish was fantastic and Aiden is still talking about it to everyone he meets. He even carries his award with him in his rucksack!

"Thank you to everyone at Make-A-Wish and all those involved in making Aiden's special wish come true."

Make-A-Wish needs to raise £5 million this year to continue granting their magical wishes. To find out how you can help support the charity, please visit www.makeawish.org.uk or phone 01276 40 50 80.

(See Dad's story left)

Craig runs marathon for Make a Wish

CRAIG BRUNT from Barry Island ran in the Virgin London Marathon on April 25, in aid of Make-A-Wish Foundation UK, the charity that grants magical wishes to children and young people fighting life-threatening illnesses.

Craig (32) a learning support assistant at a disabled school in Barry, completed the 26 miles in 5 hours 30 minutes and his efforts are on target to raise nearly £1,500 for Make-A-Wish.

He said: "I ran for Make-A-Wish because my little boy Aiden who is fighting Congenital Heart Disease had a wish last year to be Spiderman for the day and Make-A-Wish gave him such a brilliant day. It is a brilliant charity – I had to give something back.

"When families have been through hell like we have, a charity like Make-A-Wish makes all the difference."

It is not too late to support Craig. To make a donation, to refer a child for a special wish or for information on places available in half marathons and 10k runs later in the year, visit www.make-a-wish.org.uk.

(see story right 'Aiden becomes Spiderboy')

Memorial appeal for 'forgotten heroine'

A LOCAL councillor is supporting an appeal to raise funds to erect a memorial to a black nurse who tended the wounds of injured and dying soldiers in the Crimean War.

"Mary Seacole is one of Britain's forgotten black heroines," said Vale councillor Rob Curtis of Barry.

"I was shocked to learn that if successful, this memorial to Mary Seacole, will be the first single statue dedicated to a named black woman anywhere in the UK!"

Mother Seacole travelled to the Crimea using her own money, and set up the British Hotel near Balaclava to nurse, feed and house soldiers recovering from war injuries.

She often visited the front line, sometimes under fire, carrying baskets of medicines, which she used to tend the wounded.

She returned to London bankrupt and ill. She died in 1881 at the age of 76, and was buried in Kensal Green in north-west London.

Coun Curtis is holding a Fairtrade Mary Seacole coffee morning on Saturday, June 12, at 11am. Tickets £3.

For more information, contact Coun Curtis on 01446 736287.

BARRY MEN'S FORUM NEWS

Insight into famous family

THE speaker at the last meeting of the current session of Barry Men's Forum was one of the foremost experts on the famous Brunel family, namely Stephen K Jones.

Mr Jones took members of the forum through some of the complex events featured in the last book of his trilogy, namely the maritime achievements of Brunel senior, the father of the world famous engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Isambard's son, Henry Marc - who was largely responsible for building Penarth Docks and was a partner/engineer in the construction of the Barry Docks project.

Henry Marc had a special interest in hydraulic engineering and was appointed to engineer the hydraulic lifting sections of Tower Bridge in London.

The birthplace of Isambard Kingdom's father, a farm in Normandy, is still standing, but he left for Canada and the USA when the French Revolution broke out and became a citizen of the USA.

During the Napoleonic wars, against the land of his birth, he devised a system of mass-producing essential rope blocks for Nelson's navy and the block mill he established still stands in Portsmouth.

In early manhood, his son Isambard Kingdon helped his father in the construction of the Thames Tunnel before striking out on his own independent career - to undying fame and an early death brought on by overwork and a huge consumption of cigars.

Both Isambard Kingdom and his son, Henry Marc had many connections with Wales that are too numerous to mention here, but a little known fact is that the massive chains for Brunel's the 'Great Eastern' were made in Pontypridd.

Brunel's first famous passenger ship, the Great Western', was one of the reasons for the construction of the docks at Newport.

The paddle wheels of this vessel prevented its easy access into Bristol, so Newport was seen as an alternative. In the event, Liverpool became the port of choice for various reasons.

The last voyage of the SS Great Britain (now happily undergoing a new incarnation in Bristol) took place from Penarth, after which she ran into trouble and was left derelict for many years on the Falkland Islands.

Stephen finished his talk by giving details about Isambard Kingdom's greatest ship, the 'Great Eastern', whose Pontypridd chains have already been mentioned.

This mighty vessel was launched sideways, with great difficulty, in 1858, into the Thames. She was the largest ship in the world at that time and remained so until 1907, which was a stupendous record.

Designed to carry 6,000 passengers and enough coal to get to Australia, she ran half-empty and was never a commercial success until she started to lay the new, much-needed signal cables to the USA and other parts of the world.

Meetings of the men's forum will recommence on Thursday October 7. They will then be held weekly at 10.30am. New members welcome. For further information, telephone 029 2059 4881.

MAC TANNER

CADS welcome twinning visitors

COWBRIDGE Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS) will be welcoming visitors from France to the town with a performance in the Market Theatre.

The French visitors will see the show on May 14, but local residents can see the show on May 13.

Peter Sain-le-Berry told The GEM: "We will be performing a stage version of *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Sainte-Exupéry for our French twinning visitors from Clisson on May 14.

"Because our theatre is small, and because there are a good number of twinners, we cannot offer any seats for that performance.

"However, we will also be performing the show on Thursday, May 13, at 8pm in the Market Theatre. We are not selling tickets, but anyone who wishes to make a small donation in lieu of a ticket will find that gesture most warmly appreciated. Doors will open at 7pm."

He continued: "The Little Prince is a book for both children and adults and holds a remarkably high place in French literature. Sainte-Exupery was a wartime pilot who was shot down in 1944.

"The show lasts for about an hour. It is a comedy with a little philosophy thrown in.

"It is full of sound effects and dramatic surprises, so bring yourself and the children and grandchildren!"

This eyesore could cost the flytipper responsible £20,000!

ABOVE:
The historic Roman road, just outside Cowbridge, was the scene of a particularly bad example of flytipping recently. Dozens of tyres were dumped along with a pair of industrial gloves. The eyesore was captured by GEM photographer Glyn Evans. The Vale Council warned that this sort of crime can result in fines of up to £20,000 and/or six months imprisonment, or unlimited fines and up to two years imprisonment if the case leads to a conviction at Crown Court.

Cowbridge tennis club in season's openers

The Cowbridge tennis club teams played their opening matches in the summer doubles leagues last week.

The Ladies 1st team came through a close match against David Lloyd which was tied 3-3 in rounds, but a win was awarded to Cowbridge with the higher number of sets and games won.

Gill Ridout and Alison Kurobasa won both their matches and Jane Richards and Jane James won one and narrowly lost out in a tie break for their other match which was on court for over two hours! It was a long night of tennis that finished under floodlights, to mark the start of their Division 3 campaign.

Following an outstanding unbeaten season last year, the league committee have jumped Cowbridge Men's team up 3 divisions this season, and they proved that they are planning on going higher with a very good 8-1 win over Firbank Dale.

Simon Lake, Paul Arnold, Ian Duggan, Peter Booth, Allan Duggan and Colin Rees put in strong performances to start the ball rolling.

The newly promoted ladies 2nd team had some close games in their 2-4 defeat away at Whitchurch, with June Donagh and Sue Wilkin, Jane Wilby and Kathy Harwood-Morgan winning matches.

AK

Prime Minister pledges:

'MORE DISCOS AND GYM!'

JESSICA Barker, aged 10, was elected last week as the Jenner Park School's first female 'Prime Minister'.

In a close election, up against nine other candidates, she delivered a confident speech, promising more discos and gymnastics.

She offered more choice of school dinners and children being in more control of their learning, including more trips.

"Thank you to all the people who voted for me – and my team who made my posters" she said modestly.

Headteacher, Mr Davies, spoke highly of Jessica and all the candidates.

"The speeches were a joy – lots of plain-speaking politicians for a change – and lots of fun into the bargain, with no mention of taxes, bankers or public spending cuts – just more play times".

Iron Man 2 offers you plenty of bang for your bucks!

SCREEN TALK

by GARETH JAMIESON

WHEN *Iron Man* was released in May 2008, there wasn't the huge outcry of excitement you would normally associate with tentpole pictures.

After all, this was a film based on a Marvel superhero who wasn't particularly well known outside of the comic book fanbase, directed by a Jon Favreau, who was more notable for being an actor rather than a director, and starring Robert Downey Jr, a man who had received enough second chances to last a lifetime.

That the end product was such a riotously enjoyable film, establishing both leading man and director reputations, as well as earning huge sums at the box office, was a pleasing surprise, and one that easily necessitated the need for a sequel.

Iron Man 2 picks up from where the first one left off with the ramifications of Tony Stark's (Downey Jr) admission that he is Iron Man beginning to reverberate.

Stark is now a marked man, with Justin Hammer (Sam Rockwell), a fellow arms designer, hellbent on usurping Stark's power, the American government demanding that Stark hand over the Iron Man suit, while, in Russia, Ivan Vanko (Mickey Rourke) takes a special interest in Stark as he creates his own weapon.

Along with Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow) and friend 'Rhodey' Rhodes (Don Cheadle), Stark must try to overcome the obstacles placed in his way...

The superhero genre tends to follow a pretty routine path; the first film sets up the characters, their traits and usually ends with the main character accepting their powers and responsibilities, thus allowing the second to delve deeper into the psyche of the character and raising the stakes.

Some (*X2*, *The Dark Knight*, *Spiderman 2*) have achieved this with aplomb, and *Iron Man 2*, while perhaps not hitting those aforementioned heights, gives it a pretty good go, resulting in another thrilling and engaging outing for the character.

While it follows the template set out above, it's how it attacks it that marks it out.

Yes, the deep introspection that is usually found in these sequels is present and correct to a degree, but it isn't the overriding key theme, as Jon Favreau and screenwriter Justin Theroux do their best to emphasise the lighter side of their characters and their situations.

It's a technique that has to strike a fine balance, and by and large succeeds, Theroux's script zinging with witty one-liners, a satisfying sense of fun and a large dash of bravura and excitement.

What it does a little less successfully is fully explore the darker side of the story, a side which would give the film a little more drama and depth.

One of the key elements of the story was to be Tony Stark's alcoholism, which featured in a comic book story arc; however, here Stark has one heavy night on the ale which gives way to regrets and recriminations.

Coupled with the sidelining of the chemistry between Downey Jr and Paltrow, whose interaction fizzes when given the opportunity, and it's a screenplay that is more than workable within its confines, yet lacks the profundity and maturity to give it that extra degree of wallop.

In the director's chair, Jon Favreau carries on from where he left off with the first film, directing with style and finesse, giving the film a wonderful sense of scope and adventure, while ramping up the action sequences with aplomb.

There's nothing overtly different from what was on display in the first one – it is still mechanics versus mechanics as Iron Man has to battle a variety of technologies .

However, what is noticeable is that, much like Chris Nolan with *The Dark Knight*, Favreau is obviously far more comfortable helming these sequences, with a Monaco grand prix sequence showing he is adept at wringing drama from the action.

He is also given far more exposition to deal with narrative-wise, as Theroux's script aims to expand upon the universe with nods to other Marvel characters soon to be making their way to the big screen (a post-credits sequence setting up one of those films) and the formation of the Avengers group led by Samuel L Jackson's Nick Fury.

Marrying these concerns, as well as a story that has far more going on than its predecessor, shows how surefooted a helmer Favreau has become.

Given his incredible run of form at the moment, Robert Downey Jr is a whirlwind of quips and charisma as Stark, parlaying his natural likeability into the character, whose world-saving heroics are less an inconvenience and more a chance for him to pose for the cameras and accept the baubles.

However, the other side of the character, the one concerned with preventing trouble and ensuring people's safety allows Downey Jr the chance to show the more serious side of Stark, developing the character well.

While Gwyneth Paltrow's peppy turn as Pepper Potts was a highlight of the first film, here she's sidelined by the other characters, all of whom resonate, but it does a disservice to Paltrow and her chemistry with Downey Jr that she isn't afforded more of an opportunity to shine.

The new cast members are all good, Mickey Rourke bringing an edge of menace and dimension to the villainous Vanko, despite not being utilised all that effectively.

Sam Rockwell laps up playing the shady Hammer, showing just how good a performer he can be when not being under-utilised by studios.

Scarlett Johansson, as the mysterious Natalie Rushman, not only manages to warm up the males in the audience, but also proves to be more than adept at getting her hands dirty, particularly in a wonderfully enjoyable facility infiltration sequence.

Throw in Don Cheadle, slipping easily into Terrence Howard's shoes as Rhodes, and small turns from Favreau and Samuel L Jackson, and you have a cast that demand your attention and, more often than not, deliver.

With all the elements coming together, *Iron Man 2* is a sequel that, in terms of scale and spectacle, improves on the first one; however, it does lack the first film's freewheeling and carefree feel, coming across a little bit too structured and, dare I say it, forced.

It doesn't make *Iron Man 2* a poor film, far from it – but a bit more fizz would make it an even more enjoyable viewing experience.

VERDICT – The blockbuster season begins with a bang, as *Iron Man 2* sets a high standard for the rest of the summer's efforts.

Packed full of action, laughs and some strong turns, it may just fall short of the charm of the first instalment, but still offers up a thrilling two hours of entertainment. *Recommended.*

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number 616.

● **£2000:** 586813.

● **The roll-over, which now stands at £1,000 was not won this week.**

● **£10:**183895; 782790; 866080; 658987; 622598; 230424; 624872; 227485; 738589; 289825; 668308; 701875; 573585; 661346; 541909; 201031; 838676; 103603; 116788; 141144.

● **£5:** 601144; 427678; 272397; 478319; 881001; 337854; 810613; 284554; 611650; 761814; 623601; 283507; 875987; 218797; 540636; 712053; 810598; 116084; 385312; 699366; 563331; 864954; 468352; 490208; 496516; 252950; 306225; 402935; 788081; 217695; 206315; 320439; 470130; 346693; 663035; 433046; 502459; 595837; 705878; 840017; 286674; 170830; 164864; 328828; 660872; 627122; 118622; 667731; 606954; 485436; 927861; 824477; 387246; 446231; 568643; 725191; 743553; 364517; 717528; 389178.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For Ty Hafan lottery information, please telephone 02920 672062.

National Smile Month 2010
May 16th - June 16th
British Dental Health Foundation
Advertisement Feature

National Smile Month says: 'keep your teeth healthy for a lifetime'

NATIONAL Smile Month, which runs from May 16 to June 16, is organised by the UK's leading independent oral health charity, the British Dental Health Foundation.

The foundation is dedicated to improving the public's oral health, and this year's campaign is called 'Teeth4Life'.

'Teeth4Life' highlights the importance of looking after your teeth and maintaining them for life. It also stresses the fact that a healthy diet can improve the quality of your life.

A spokesman for the foundation explained: "Once again, our message is intended to raise awareness of the systemic link between good oral health and good overall body health.

"The foundation is dedicated to supporting the dental profession. With the help of dentists, and if people take care of them, teeth can stay healthy for life."

For more information on National Smile Month contact British Dental Health Foundation, Smile House, East Union Street, Rugby, CV22 6AJ; or email: pr@dentalhealth.org; telephone: 01788 546365.

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Probus members' workshop tour

TWENTY members of Dinas Powys Probus club recently visited MoD St Athan. They spent the day viewing the electrical and mechanical workshops. The visit concluded with a visit to the gymnasium. Members are pictured (above) with one of the Queen's Land Rovers. Commander Coxon is at the wheel, accompanied by Colin Linnard. RG

BUMPER CROWDS AT BONVILSTON FOR WELSH POINT-TO-POINT GRAND NATIONAL

AS you can see from Glyn Evans' pictorial record of Bonvilston hosting the Welsh Point-to-Point Grand National, it proved a great day out for the competitors, the spectators, and four legged friends too!

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

Other pictures are available from this event.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:
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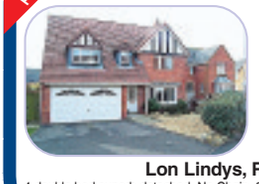

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Barry Wanderers great against Bridgend...

but not so good at Usk!

BARRY Wanderers (BWCC) played Bridgend Third XI at Hayes Point and Wanderers were asked to bat first.

It looked a good decision as within six overs, BWCC lost both openers Tom Edwards (0) and Ed Sherriff (seven) cheaply and were struggling on 26-2. It got worse with the departure of Tom Ridgwell for three, and it was left to last year's player of the season, Aled Hughes, to steady the ship.

He was still keen to play his shots, but his control allowed the Wanderers to recover somewhat. However, he was caught and bowled by Brett for 48, and after Dave Johnson came and went for a bright and breezy 15, the Wanderers were in terrible trouble on 89-5 off 26 overs.

It was left to Neil Blundell and James Hassett to lead the fightback. Taking 31 balls to get off the mark, Blundell burst into life and played a number of beautiful shots to pick up the run-rate spectacularly.

He found a willing partner in Hassett, who rotated the strike well early on in his innings before unleashing carnage.

The runs began to flow and together they put on 83, and by the time Blundell had departed for a brilliant 57, he had put his side in a position to push for maximum batting points from the last five overs.

Hassett hit a number of boundaries before being stumped off Frew for 40, and it was left to Jamie Keir (12 not out) and the tail to scramble together a final score of 214-9, which was a terrific total, considering the first 25 overs .

The Wanderers' opening attack of Neil Mantell and Beckett bowled with verve and menace from the start, and although Henry scored freely to begin with, he soon fell, caught by Hassett at fly-slip off Beckett, and the Bridgend top and middle-order soon capitulated.

Mantell had Frew caught behind by Keir for one, Brett was bowled for a duck by Beckett and after Ling (two) and West (13) departed, the game was under control for the Wanderers.

Aled Hughes joined the party, bowling miserly and helping himself to a wicket before first-team debutant Phil John got in on the act and picked up two wickets of his own.

There was some late resistance for Bridgend with Jones (13) and, in particular, R Pearce (27), smashing some big hits but it was all in vain as they were eventually all out for 120, with Beckett picking up the final Bridgend wicket, his fourth of the match.

It was a great team effort by the Seasiders to claim a maximum 26-point victory after being really up against it.

They travel to Crumlin next week and will look to carry forward the momentum they gained from this match.

The SofaSofa Barry Wanderers man of the match was Neil Blundell.

Welsh Cup

SUNDAY saw the Wanderers travel to Usk to face the Welsh Premier League side in a Welsh Cup encounter.

On a chilly and overcast day, skipper Jamie Keir won the toss and invited his hosts to bat first on a rock-hard wicket which was a change for the Hayes Point men, who are more accustomed to batting on cabbage patches than concrete.

Faced with the task of trying to contain their more illustrious hosts, but also looking to push for wickets, the opening bowlers, Fenton and Beckett, did a good job in restricting the batsmen.

Usk didn't ever truly get away from the Wanderers and they were rewarded when Jonny Hill had Tamplin caught well by Blundell for 28.

However, there was little else for the Wanderers to cheer about. James and Townsend began to push the score along and combined boundaries with quick singles to rotate the strike.

The Wanderers had little answer to the master class they were witnessing and both James, who was eventually caught by Hill off Blundell, and Townsend helped themselves to centuries, scoring 129 and 123* respectively.

Usk finished their 45 overs on 329-2.

The Wanderers put up a sterling effort in the field and kept working hard but the gulf in class was apparent, with the most noticeable thing being that the Usk batsmen were able to capitalise on any loose balls or fumbles by fielders, whereas these may have gone unpunished in matches in the WCCC.

Overall though, the bowlers kept charging in with plenty of heart and never gave up.

The target was never in danger and Usk ripped through the Wanderers top-order.

Jamie Keir, Mark Ellis and David Johnson all departed for 0, and although Jonny Hill and Pete Coleman looked dangerous, they soon departed as well.

After nine overs the Wanderers were on 22-5. Steve Norman (13) and Neil Blundell steadied the ship and pushed the score towards respectability but after they departed, the rest soon followed.

The Wanderers were all out for 84 and comfortably beaten and outclassed, although the efforts of the Seasiders could not be questioned.

It was a good day though and a fine opportunity to play at a nice ground, have a cracking tea and play against top opponents.

The Dock View Autos Barry Wanderers man of the match was Neil Blundell.

Conservative Mayor-elect for the Vale is forced to withdraw her nomination

THE prospective Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan, Coun Maureen Kelly Owen, has withdrawn because she faces a period of recuperation after surgery.

The Conservatives have now nominated Coun Colin Osborne, who represents the Llandough ward.

Coun Kelly Owen told The GEM: "I am really sorry to have had to withdraw my name as the Conservative group's nominee as Mayor-elect for the Vale Council at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting in May.

"This is because what I had thought to be simply a 'jolt' suffered before Christmas has proved to be rather more significant and I now need urgent orthopaedic surgery to deal with it.

"I am bitterly disappointed and hope to be recovered before too long. Nevertheless, one needs to be fully fit from the word go to do full justice to the role of Mayor of the Vale for the whole year in office."

She continued: "My personal consolation is that Coun. Colin Osborne has been nominated by my fellow Conservative councillors.

"This means that if full council accepts that nomination, former Councillor Mrs Ruby Osborne would become Mayor's Consort – as I had earlier asked her to be for me, and as she did so ably when I was deputy Vale Mayor in 2005-06."

Coun Maureen Kelly Owen (right) with Mrs Ruby Osborne.

Walker Cup at Cottrell Park

THE monthly meeting of the Glamorgan Farmers' Golf Society, held recently on the ever-improving Button course at Cottrell Park, attracted 46 contestants – all attempting to win the coveted 'Walker Cup' supplied by the day's sponsors Gaskell & Walker, solicitors of Cowbridge.

The day's proceedings began with popular member David Harris greeting everyone with a glass (or two) of champagne to celebrate his 50th birthday.

This kind gesture was much appreciated by those in attendance, but also cited as the main reason why a number of competitors failed to perform.

Despite the damp conditions, a number of members returned very impressive scores with the sponsors' representative, Tosh Taylor, leading the field with 40 stableford points to collect The Walker Cup.

Bryan Owen and Neil McLean both scored 39 points to finish second and third respectively, with Bryan's back nine of 20 points proving crucial. Neil's failure to score on the 17th hole proved costly.

Chris Rooney, with 36 points, finished fourth.

Willie Morgan, normally a fine weather player only, deserves a special mention for completing his round – despite his many threats to return early to the clubhouse.

Winner Tosh Taylor (left) with runner-up Bryan Owen.

Guest section

The guest section was keenly contested, with Llancadle resident Chris Watson taking the honours with 32 points. Robbie Llewellyn, with the same score but an inferior back nine, finished runner-up.

Dai John was a surprise winner of the 'James the Butcher' sponsored longest drive competition, while nearest the pin on the par three holes were David Williams, Robbie Llewellyn, Ray Simkiss and also Islwyn Rees.

This was a remarkable achievement by 79-year-old Islwyn, whose was playing his third round of golf in five days. Islwyn was also successful in correctly guessing 71 balls would fail to return home to collect the 'Premier Turf' sponsored bottle of whisky, which raised £68 for the Velindre Hospital Appeal Fund.

The society's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 27, at St Mellons Golf Club, when members will be competing for The Shrieval Trophy, courtesy of Mr Islwyn Rees.

TMcC

Gadd century inspires Barry Athletic to impressive victory

CLUB captain Nathan Baker led his Barry Athletic First XI into the new season last Saturday and newly-promoted Upper Rhondda CC were the opponents.

The conditions were damp, grey and overcast, so anything could happen. Upper Rhondda won the toss and chose to bowl first.

The Stags were soon in complete control as boundaries were hit 'here, there and everywhere'. Opening batsman, Andrew Buckland, got the Stags going with an impressive 68 – which included eight fours and three sixes.

However, batsman of the day goes to Ian Gadd, with a magnificent 120 from 122 balls – including 21 fours.

After promising so much – with 378 runs during six friendly matches, Nathan Baker was brought down to earth with a three-ball duck.

Thankfully, other batting displays – Anjan Ganapathy (35), Scott Malpas (18) and Craig Thomas (20), helped the Stags to a massive 301-7 from their 50 overs – a new record for the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Cricket League.

After the interval, Upper Rhondda (somehow) set their sights on chasing down 302 runs to win and the innings immediately went in the Stags' favour, with the visitors restricted to 37-6 from 13 overs – with James Haswell and Peter Hellyar dominating with the ball.

It was only a matter of time, and with 15 overs to go, the Stags wrapped things up. Upper Rhondda were bowled for 179 and Peter Hellyar had his first five-wicket haul of the season. Haswell gave good assistance, with figures of 4-50 from 15 overs.

Barry Athletic First XI won by 122 runs and claimed the maximum 20 points.

Second XI

Second XI captain, Damon Leake, was left in frustration after the match at Newport Fugitives was cancelled, due to the Friday downpours at Newport.

This means that Leake will have to wait until next Saturday to make his debut as captain, against Radyr.

Cup delayed

Due to the overnight downpours in Cardiff, the Welsh Cup match between Pentyrch and Barry Athletic was cancelled and will be replayed on Sunday at Pentyrch.

Third XI

Newly-appointed Third XI captain, Andy Ellis, began his campaign with a friendly against St. Fagans. Fine weather at the Barry Oval mixed with moist conditions influenced the St Fagans captain to bat after tea.

The innings began emphatically with opening batsmen, Ashley Baker and Jophin Reji, getting the Stags off to a flyer with 29 runs coming from the first four overs.

However, Baker fell to an in-swinging 'yorker' for 22. Reji continued and with the assistance of promising youngster, John Phillips, the Stags were going nicely. With the score at 88-1 from 16 overs, Reji fell to a straight ball just three runs short of a well deserved 50.

Up to that point, the Stags were in full control. Now the visitors were getting their tails up and started to bowl with more purpose.

They upped their game and showed that they were no pushovers – restricting the Stags to less than four runs per over, in the following 10.

Thankfully, the rest of the batting order contributed to the innings – Jake Griffitt (16*), Richard Eastman (16), Edryd Thomas (26) and John Phillips (38 – a personal best), propelling the Stags to a reasonable 214-9 from their 40 overs.

After the interval opening bowlers, Jake Griffitt (8-1-42-0) and David Frost (8-1-30-0), looked very sharp as chances came from everywhere, for the first wicket.

Dropped catches from the slip-fielders brought much frustration for the Stags, who were starting to believe that it was going to be one of those days in the field.

A brilliant display from bowlers, Andy Ellis (8-1-20-0), Ashley Baker (8-1-17-1), Andrew Buckland (4-0-11-0), along with some excellent fielding from the Stags, brought the match back in Barry's favour, with three wickets falling (including two batsmen being run out).

The match was pretty much won by the time that the third wicket was taken and it was just a case of making sure that nothing extraordinary happened.

Thankfully, that wasn't the case and the Stags closed the game out, with St. Fagans finishing on 157-3 from 40 overs.

Warriors beat Eagles

COWBRIDGE Warriors under-12 football team are flying high after a spirited win over a determined Barry Eagles side.

The fact that the team was one goal down at half time, but hit back with six goals, showed just how steadily it has improved during this season.

Sixteen goals from Jo Traherne in the last four victories, with Ben Jones, Dan Oddy and Cai Owen also netting regularly, has seen the confidence of the whole squad soar.

Nathan Robson's goal from the halfway line will stay in the memory for a long time.

The midfield terriers on Saturday hassled the opposition with Owain Llion, Seb Chan and Max Lloyd excelling, and Alfie Sanderson, Steff Godwin and Cory Brooks proving popular and valuable additions to our squad.

All players who train share game time, and with the enthusiasm currently so high – who knows, they may be some hard summer training sessions – up Merthyr Mawr sand dunes!

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Public Notices

Gareth Jones are now in receipt of an offer for the sum of £85,000 for **28 Bell Street, BARRY CF62 6JT**
Anyone wishing to place an offer on the property should contact Gareth Jones, 85 High Street, Barry CF62 7DX - 01446 744812 before exchange of contracts.

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In Boverton on Friday, April 23.
Please ring
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Family Notices

PEREGRINE, Mair

Peacefully, on April 28 at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Mair of Llanblethian, beloved wife of the late Philip, dearly loved mother of Nik and Jennifer, foster mother of John Watts and family, sister of the late Dr Bryan Thomas (Canada).

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Friday, May 7, service 2.00pm at Llanblethian Church followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend at 3.15pm. No flowers by request, donations in lieu if desired to Treloar Trust, Froyle House, Upper Froyle, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4JX.

HORSFALL, Edward

Peacefully at ITU Hospital Morriston, Swansea on 29 April, Edward of Llantwit Major. Beloved husband of Antonia, loving father of Michael and Margaret, and their partners. Resting at W.A.Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major until the funeral service on Tuesday 11th May 2010 at Our Lady & St. Illtyds Catholic Church at 10.00.a.m. followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium at 11.30.a.m. Family flowers only by request, but donations in lieu may be made to I.T.U. Morriston General Hospital c/o the Funeral Director (cheques only).

WILLIAMSON
Dennis Benjamin

Died suddenly at home in Barry on Sunday April 25.

Dearly-loved partner of Nora. He will be sadly missed and was much loved by Dennis and Jan, Stephen and Kim, Antony and Pam, Mark and Julie, Michael and Reinhild (sons and daughters in law). He will be sadly missed and was much loved by Nora's family, Emma and Alan, David and Taufiq.

Dennis was loved and cherished by all his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Dennis was vice-chairman of the Barry and District Male Skittles League and was an active member of Dow Corning Retirees' Association. For many years, Dennis was a coach driver for Hawthorn Travel and made many friends during that time. He will be very sadly missed by his loving family, friends and neigbours.

Resting at A.G. Adams Funeral Home, Gladstone Road, Barry until the funeral service in the chapel of A.G. Adams & Son on Monday 10 May, 2010 at 1.45pm, followed by a committal service at Coychurch Crematorium at 3.15pm.

Family flowers only please, donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to the British Heart Foundation Cymru, 14 Park Grove, Cardiff CF10 3BN.

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You haven't changed...
Happy 16th Birthday
(5/5/2010)
Carrinna Dee
Lots of Love, Mum, Dad, Keshia, Karisha, Nathan, Anthony, Jay and all the family.
x x x

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Metallic Grey, MOT Oct 2010, taxed, leather, air con, classic summer motoring.
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Mazda 323
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05 **05 AUDI TT 1.8 (180) 3-Dr Coupe.** In Brilliant red with black Nappa interior, climate control, ESP, heated seats, CD, only 46,150 miles **£12,495**

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FAMILY

09 **09 FORD FOCUS 1.6 (100ps) Style** 5 door hatchback in Aquarius blue with dark flint interior, air con, front fog lights, colour coded bumpers, manufactures warranty only 5,760 miles **£9,995**

07 **57 CITROEN C3 1.4 HDi Cool 5-dr hatchback** in Arctic silver with Galand black interior, air con, cd, immobiliser, £35 a year road tax, one owner, only 37,845 miles **£6,995**

06 **56 TOYOTA Corolla T2 Colour Collection, 1.4 5-dr Hatchback.** In eclipse black with silver fleck interior, a/c, alloys, colour coded side skirts, audio controls on steering wheel, one owner, only 32,415 miles **£7,995**

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05 **05 HONDA Civic 1.7 CDTi** in magnetic blue with hatch fabric interior, alloy wheels, air con, cd, colour coded bumpers, only 55,130 miles **£6,495**

05 **05 RENAULT Grand Scenic 1.5 DCi 100 Rush 5-Dr Hatchback.** In silver with beige interior, CD, air con, colour coded bumpers, seven seats, only 63,790 miles **£5,995**

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02 **51 TOYOTA Corolla 1.6 VVTi GLS Automatic 5-dr** in Atlantis blue metallic with hocney interior, alloy wheels, air con, sunroof, cd auto-changer, body coloured bumpers, only 34,790 miles **£3,495**

SMALL

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09 **09 CHEVROLET Aveo LT 1.4** in pearl black with bricket cloth, aircon, alloy wheels, colour coded bumpers, alarm and immobiliser, cd, only 16,900 miles **£6,995**

08 **58 VAUXHALL Corsa 1.2 16v Design (A/C).** 5 door in ice blue with dark interior, air con, MP3 input, colour coded bumpers, front fog lights, only 19,950 miles **£8,495**

08 **58 VAUXHALL Corsa Breeze 1.0 12v 3-Dr.** In silver lightning with punch charcoal interior, alloy wheels, air con, CD, colour coded bumpers, only 12,010 miles **£7,295**

08 **08 FORD Ka Zetec Climate** in diamond white with cascade indigo interior, colour coded bumpers, alloy wheels, air con, cd, quickclear front screen, only 18,130 miles **£5,995**

08 **08 FORD KA Studio.** In panther black with cascade interior, immobiliser, CD, drivers airbag, central locking, only 32,349 miles **£4,995**

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07 **07 PEUGEOT 107 1.0 12V Urban** 3 door hatchback in met Blue with black interior, CD, electri windows, full service history, one owner, £35 a year road tax, only 7,080 miles **£5,995**

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05 **05 RENAULT Grand Scenic 1.5 DCi 100 Rush 5-Dr Hatchback.** In silver with beige interior, CD, air con, colour coded bumpers, seven seats, only 63,790 miles **£5,995**

03 **53 MINI Cooper 1.6 Pepper** in pure silver met with Kaleido half leather interior, panormaic sunroof, alloy wheels, cd, body coloured bumpers, only 24,530 miles **£6,995**

04 **54 VOLKSWAGEN Polo 1.9 TDi (100ps) Sport 5-dr** in rosewood red pearlescent with scala sports interior, alloy wheels, air con, body coloured bumpers, cd, only 59,790 miles **£6,495**

06 **06 FORD Mondeo 2.0 TDCi (130bhp) SIV Ghia 6-spd** in sea grey met with Aras interior, Sony cd, quickclear front screen, cruise control, climate control, alloy wheels, only 47,500 miles **£7,495**

08 **57 FORD KA Style Climate.** In tango red with cascade interior, colour coded bumpers, air con, CD, Quickclear front screen, only 32,136 miles... **£5,295**

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Vale under-15s take the national plate trophy at Llandovery

THE Vale of Glamorgan under-15 district rugby team have just completed their fixtures for the season and have managed to finish on a winning note.

The DEWAR Shield competition was always going to be a tough challenge for the team and as a consequence of a slow start to the season, the Vale were rightly positioned in the middle tier of the competition.

However, a combination of injuries, delayed fixtures due to poor weather and unavailability of players at key times meant that the best of this young group of players was very seldom seen.

This is no reflection on the team as the commitment, dedication and skill levels witnessed throughout the year's development programme, has been a credit to the local schools and rugby clubs for the continued high level of standards witnessed at this first representative level.

This was fully endorsed at the Welsh Schools National Sevens competition at Llandovery RFC on April 24, where the team managed to win the National Plate Trophy (the second year in a row that the Vale has done this).

The day's results meant that the following teams were disposed of en route to the final – Swansea Valley, Aberavon, Pembroke, Swansea (semi-final) and Cardiff (final) to top off a brilliant day.

All squad players can be very proud of the efforts shown at this competition and for the overall performance throughout the season.

Many of the squad will figure highly in next season's Cardiff Blues under-16 squad and hopefully follow in the success of Lloyd Chalke (Vale 2008/9) and achieve national honours – well done, Lloyd!

The management team of Lyn Howell (team manager) Huw Davies, Kevin Francis and Dan Connor (coaches) would like to take this opportunity to wish all of the squad the very best for the future, and to thank all the parents and schools for all of their support throughout the season.

2009/10 squad: Nathan Harris, Jack Austin, Evan Phillips, Kieron Smith, Will Anthony, Campbell Prosser, Tom Warren, Olly Hitchins, Ben Thomas, Matthew Goodlad, Jake Goodfellow, Connor Kavanagh, Jack Pritchard, Gus McPherson, Dafi Davies, Kyle Barros, Rhys Griffin, Luke Cooper, Harry Trotman, Tom Smith, Jack Wilcox, Sam Roberts, Christian Walters, Jordan Flynn, James Griffiths, Aaron Reed, Harry Hitchcock, Cameron Jones, Charlie Morris.

HUW DAVIES

WE welcome your sports items. Please email them to: ggem@internet-today.co.uk

OGMORE RIDER NICK LANDS HIS 100th CAREER WINNER

ON AND OFF THE TURF by BRIAN LEE

OGMORE'S Nick Williams (24) rode his 100th point-to-point winner on the French-bred *Musique En Tete* in the restricted race at the Llangeinor Hunt Steeplechases at Laleston.

Hunt supporters had worked hard rotovating and rolling the course to get it fit for racing following the long dry spell.

Musique En Tete looked all set for the runner-up's spot until the favourite Longwood Law, partnered by leading rider John Mathias, broke down approaching the last fence.

Musique En Tete, an 8-1 chance, is trained by Jonathan Tudor, whose wife Judith is the honorary secretary-and is owned by The Bird,White, Prior Group.

Williams, who has also booted home 45 winners under rules, rode his first point-to-point winner eight years ago at Larkhill on *Rimpton Boy*. In 2004, he won the Horse and Hound Cup at Stratford on *Torduff Express* and can also boast to having ridden a hat-trick at Cheltenham Racecourse a few years ago.

Pembrokeshire's John Mathias, who is making a bold bid for the national riders' championship, had an easy win in the mixed open race on David Evans's mare *Makena* who made nearly all the running to win by six lengths from *The Big Canadian*. *Makena* was winning for the fourth time this season.

Evan David (17) riding Norman Jones's grey *Silver Story,* took the members' race by 20 lengths from Farnogue after taking the lead approaching the 13th fence.

Evan's older brother Tom, having his first ride as a conditional jockey at Uttoxeter the same afternoon, was successful on *Liz's Dream*.

The six-year-old *Pelennor*, under Paul Tolman (23) landed a gamble in the confined race for owner Carl Pyne and trainer Robert Scrine. Given an enterprising ride by Paul Tolman, and backed from 6-1 to 5-2, *Pelennor* made all the running to score by five lengths from *Its Danny Boy,* with *Micks Prospect* a further two lengths away third.

John Williams's *Blazing Signet*, partnered by Kevin O'Keefe, was a four lengths winner of the young horse maiden after taking up the running four fences from the finish.

This seven-year-old bay gelding was given to trainer Jane Evans as a gift and is now owned by John Williams.

Dai Jones came late on the scene to steal the aged maiden race on owner/trainer Paul Thomas's *Rash Oak,* who won by two lengths from *Coolcoming*. Bought at the Ascot Sales three years ago, the quirky *Rash Oak*, according to Mr Thomas, "has a mind of his own".

Winners: Members: *Silver Story* (Evan David) 4-6 fav. Confined: *Pelennor* (Paul Tolman) 5-1. Mixed Open: *Makena* (John Mathias) 2-5 fav. Restricted: *Musique En Tete* (Nick Williams) 8-1. Young Horse Maiden: *Blazing Signet* (Keven O'Keefe) 7-1. Aged Maiden: *Rash Oak* (Dai Jones) 6-1. Pony Race: *Tippy Rosella* (Grace Dalton) 1-3 fav. Pony Race: *Mon Mellisa* (Mollyann Rees) 4-1.

You can email your views/news to Brian Lee at leebrian@btinternet.com or phone him on 02920736438.

Choirs in charity gala

WELSH Male Voice Choirs are helping Welsh families living with inherited cardiac conditions by supporting the cardiac charity SADS UK and the cardiac genetic service at University Hospital of Wales Cardiff.

On May 8, Barry Male Voice Choir will join 11 other male voice choirs, the Regimental Band of the Royal Welsh and Corp of Drums and soprano Elin Manahan Thomas and Angharad Morgan for a night of music and song, presented by BBC TV personality, Jason Mohammad.

Contact St David's Hall box office on 02920 878444 or book online at www.stdavidshallcardiff.co.uk

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175/70TR14	Bridgestone B250	£59.46	£112	£210	175/70TR14	Avon ZT5	£47.96	£92	£175	175/70TR14	Trayal	£33.60	£62	£115
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185/65HR14	Bridgestone B250	£65.49	£120	£230	185/65HR14	Avon ZV3	£52.39	£98	£190	185/65HR14	Trayal	£35.22	£67	£130
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205/55VR16	Bridgestone ER300	£72.86	£125	£240	205/55VR16	Avon ZV5	£65.29	£125	£240	205/55VR16	Maxxis	£54.71	£100	£190

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06 56 **TOYOTA Corolla T3 1.6 5-dr.** Silver, alloys **£6,975**
06 06 **FORD Focus 1.6LX AUTO 5-dr.** Met blue, 20k **£6,475**
03 53 **VW Passat 2.0 4-dr, 20v.** Met ice blue, air con **£3,475**
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Successful competition for the young members of Rising Sun Kyokushin

THE International Welsh Rising Sun Kyokushin Cup was held recently at the YMCA HUB, attracting 10 teams from around Europe and the UK.

The start of the day saw the four-to-seven-year-old Rising Sun-'Rising-Stars' enter a 'touch contact point' style of Kyokushin Karate, where approximately 10 members of the Rising Sun club took part. This style of non-contact sparring is introduced for them to gain experience before they move up to the age eight-10 group.

Jack Long was the winner of the group, Ashleigh Millard second place and Theiry Cullinane third.

In the age eight-10 category, Morgan Long from the Rising-Sun club took pole position after impressively defeating two English opponents in the experienced category.

Josh Beith took a well-deserved second place in the novice eight-10 section after overwhelming two opponents after just being pipped by one point in the finals.

In the girls 14-16 category, where the level of contact is increased, Courtneay Taylor, the club's most dedicated member, took the event by storm, defeating both of her opponents in outstanding fashion, gaining her the championship title.

The men's lightweight full contact knockdown division saw Sebby Jenkins of the Rising Sun take on an English opponent, only to draw the first and second part of the match. On the last extension round, Sebby dug deep and won in the last 30 seconds of the bout.

He then came up against Neil Griffiths of the Rising Sun, losing to Neil in the second extension round.

Sebby took a proud third place after beating an opponent from Finland in the third place play off.

Lewis Giles of the Rising Sun, took first place after beating an opponent from Finland and pipping Neil Griffiths in the final.

In the middleweight knockdown section, Sempai Spencer Bennett took the title after beating the current British champion, Alan Shanawa from Crawley. The match went the full distance, with Sempai Spencer gaining all five judges' flags at the end of the match.

Spencer, the Welsh and British full contact champion, is now looking to recruit more talented students to train for the 2012 Commonwealth championships in Australia.

Paul Stephens, the heavyweight knockdown prospect at the Rising Sun Dojo defeated two opponents, including the current British champion, Saieed Hoosain, in the finals of the tournament, gaining Paul the 2010 Welsh title.

The Rising Sun Kyokushin Karate club team also won the overall 'Welsh Rising Sun 2010 Cup' for the most wins out of all of the 10 teams that took part. Senpai Spencer Bennett took the most technical karateka award, and the lightweight fighter from Finland took the most spirited karateka trophy.

The club trains at the new Samurai martial arts and training centre next to the Savoy. All instructors are fully qualified and first aid certified.

Anybody interested in a first free beginner lesson and special introductory offer should call Lee on 07861 699476 or for more information, visit the club website @ www.-rising-sun-kyokushin.co.uk

Numerous entries at steeplechase

A total of 135 entries have been received for the Tredegar Farmers' Hunt Steeplechases at Lower Machen on Saturday.

These include Welsh Point-To-Point Grand National winner *Galtee View*, *Overlut*, *Makena*, *Grey Kid* and *Chesnut Annie*.

The first race is at 2pm and the course is being watered to ensure good going.

Evan David won the maiden race at the Ross Harriers Point-To-Point on Sunday on Marc Cohen's French-bred *Qomix,* and Sally Randel,l riding Paul Miles's prolific *Lady Myfanwy,* took the ladies' open race.

BRIAN LEE

Honda joins the hybrid car marketplace

HONDA have a bright new entry into the hybrid car market with its latest model, the Insight.

So, just what is a hybrid?

They have been around a while now, but the principle is that the car retains a standard petrol engine, but has a back-up electric motor capacity – primarily for use around town.

It means that when the car is in traffic and is stopping and going, the petrol engine just shuts off – meaning that no petrol at all is being used.

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The car even gives you a score at the end of your journey – assessing how green your driving has been.

The car's 87 bhp petrol engine is supplemented by a 14 bhp electric motor, and Honda say that returns of more than 60 mpg are possible.

The five-door hatchback starts at £16,338 and, claims Honda, undercuts the Prius by around £3,000.

For more information contact Bassetts Honda, Bridgend, 01656 649009.

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CITROEN C4 GRAND PICASSO			
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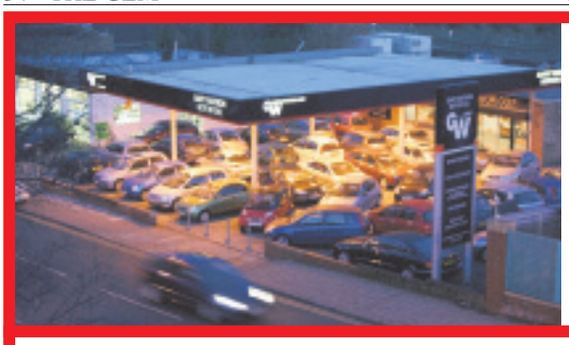

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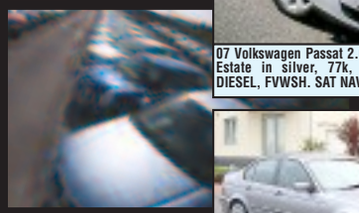

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Barry let Cefn Coed off the hook with a lacklustre display

BARRY 26 – 5 CEFN COED

NOT for the first time this season, Barry faced an opposition who opted for uncontested scrums from the outset.

The WRU need to act urgently to prevent the game becoming a pale version of rugby league. Sanctions such as points deducted would penalise weaker clubs and thus be counter-productive.

However, the present situation allows flagrant abuse and risks, damaging the fabric of the game while disadvantaging sides with strong forwards.

Barry opted to play the first half up-hill against the wind. Starting positively and after a tense opening, they were soon ahead by virtue of a forceful try by Gee, converted by Cummings.

Lack of composure, weak tackling and poor choice of options let Cefn Coed in for a well-deserved try, which they were unable to convert.

The home team finished the first half spurning easy points from two eminently kickable positions – a choice questioned by some, including this reporter.

In the second half, Barry had the elements and contours in their favour. Soon after the outset, they scored a good try by Hunt.

The game then meandered along aimlessly, with Barry doing their best to let the visitors off the hook through ill-directed manoeuvres which could not possibly have featured in training sessions.

It was as well that the front row union decided to intervene with a second try by Gee under the posts, which was converted by Cummings.

At the death, the home team picked up an elusive bonus point via a strong surge by Adams, the try being converted by the captain.

On May 15, Barry travel to Blackwood for the deciding match of the season, and coaches leave the club at 1pm - all are welcome.

CLUB NEWS.

Mr and Mrs Dave Newman are hosting a reception at Brynhill Golf Club on Wednesday, May 19, for a stalwart of Barry RFC in the 1950s – Stuart Farmer.

Stuart is making a rare trip from his home in California and would be pleased to see old friends and make new ones.

CO

Barry Town's season ends in a sense of anti-climax

GARDEN VILLAGE 2
BARRY TOWN 1

THE Dragons' season came to a disappointing end with a third defeat in the last four games.

The early kick off seemed to affect the Barry Town players, who were slow to get into the game. Garden Village took advantage of this by knocking them out of their stride.

A mistake at the back left a Village striker one on one with keeper Dan Bradley, and he made no mistake in putting his side one up with less than 15 minutes on the clock. ,

With a number of tall players in their side, Village kept the ball in the air and Barry were unable to stamp their authority on the game. When chances were created, they were squandered and the Village keeper was hardly troubled.

With 10 minutes of the half remaining, Village were awarded a corner which was played to the far post, where their number nine easily placed his header into the net.

The second half started as the last few games have, with The Dragons suddenly finding their feet and completely dominating the game. Chances came and went before Nickie Jones eventually blasted home with 15 minutes gone.

There was only one team in it now but the equaliser would not come, with The Dragons players guilty of trying to walk the ball into the net.

Garden Village broke through on one or two occasions and at least had shots, even though they did not trouble the Barry keeper.

With the Village side in the bottom five and fighting for division one survival, their hunger to win seemed to be more than Barry Town's and, although the Dragons second half performance deserved the draw, yet again they had left themselves with too much to do and Village eventually ran out the winners.

The flow of the game was not helped by a referee who continually blew his whistle for what seemed trivial things.

Manager Gavin Chesterfield will be pondering over next season and who he needs to strengthen the squad. He has not been helped at all this season with an extensive injury list.

For this game, he was without Damon Searle, Kirk Huggins, Kurt Bettles, Lewis James, Ian Jones, Anthony Redwood and Michael Hayward, with Michael Parkins on the bench, but in reality on the injured list.

Team: Dan Bradley; James Simpson, Lewis Cosslett, Dan Clare, Atif Bashir; Rob Blatchford, Scott Jones (substitute Dan Marshall), Sam Hartrey, Nickie Jones: Jaymes Dixon (substitute Josh Bell), Christian Mills (sub Sam Small). Substitutes; Michael Parkins, Richard Johnson.

David Cole

Mixed fortunes for the Romilly club bowlers

BARRY Romilly Bowls club played their first competitive games of the new season on Saturday.

Although the weather was dry, chilly conditions prevailed on greens that were not yet at their best.

The club side travelled to the Penarth Windsor Bowling Club for their WBA match, which turned out to be a torrid affair with both teams keen to succeed.

Tony Freeman's team of C Geen, G Eastment and C Cogbill were involved in a remarkable game. They were on fire for the first 10 ends and led 17 shots to one, and were clearly happy with their game.

However, their opponents then came alive with a counter attack, going on to score 19 shots over the remaining 11 ends and win the rink 18-20.

Brian Foscolo's rink of club captain Mel Newman, H Jones and M Gershenson had a solid game and were never in trouble. They led 19 – 6 after 11 ends, going on to win 23 – 20 despite Windsor stalwarts Ken McLeod and Tony Holmes efforts.

Dave Wright's rink of R Cowling, G Trepleton and P Gershenson were the top bananas on the day against a strong Windsor side led by their able skip Tom Fahey.

Romilly scored a big six on the eighth end to take a 10 – 7 lead. Windsor then went on to gain nine shots over the next eight ends to lead by one shot, but could not recover from the nine shots Romilly scored over the final ends to win the rink 25 – 21.

Alan Bryan's rink of R Blueit, M Doyle and A Burge drew the short straw on this occasion and lost the rink 13 shots to 21, mainly due to low scoring on the 10 ends they won.

The aggregate score for the match was 79 shots to 82 for Windsor.

Romilly also entertained Cadoxton Bowling Club for their A Team's SVLA Fixture on Saturday and won the match 87 – 72.

Bryn Gough's rink of J Jones, D Bannister and J Coles won their game 31 – 16.

Alf Woolcock's rink of B Hewitt, D Ford and G Rees won their game 23 – 16.

Bob Wyatt's rink of P Hoad, K Westgate and A Jones lost their game 19 – 21.

C Collins rink of V McFarland, T Bloomfield and L Jones lost their game 14 – 19.

RH

BARRY ATHLETIC BOWLS CLUB

Big win starts cricket season

BARRY Athletic Bowls Club opened its WBA Carruthers Shield qualifying group with a runaway 99-68 win against Pencoed at Barry Island last Saturday.

Top rink honours – and the match clincher – went to skip Robert Horgan. His rink romped to a 30-9 victory, while there were wins for skips Glyn Thomas and Chris Blake.

The Athletic resume the WBA programme later this month with an away fixture at Cadoxton, followed by matches against Bridgend Municipal and Maesteg Welfare.

Scores: Barry Ath v Pencoed – G Gane, DK Williams, B Parrish, C Blake 25, B Armstrong, B Ford, P Ellis, D Hopkins 11.

S McKernan, J Donovan, K Harris, G Thomas 25, S Thomas, W Peyton, T Pearson, D Hooper 24.

D Evans, D Jones, C Wright, R Horgan 30, T Perez, L Watkins, R Elgood, M Eskins 9.

J Ball, J Beanland, L Stanley, G Whittaker 19, M Witts, G Thomas, R Sherrard, J Fear 24.

The Athletic's 'A' team continued their early season friendly warm-up schedule against a strong Penarth squad at Rectory Road in chilly conditions and on a tricky green.

The Athletic trailed in 52-83, but there were promising performances, especially on Gareth Humphreys' rink

They were trailing 1–12 at one stage but the squad, featuring Alf Pidduck, John Morton and Bill Summerell, fought back and eventually went down by one shot.

Young Barry gymnastic pair are moving up the rankings

TWO Barry YMCA Gymnastics Club members have recently achieved success on both a national and international level.

Thirteen-year-old Kiera Brennan and 12-year-old Morgan Horne, who are part of the Welsh Gymnastics Academy, both proudly competed for Wales at the 2010 Celtic Cup Championships.

In this event they competed against gymnasts from Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland.

Morgan competed in the junior section, where she assisted the Welsh team in becoming the Welsh Celtic Cup Junior Champions, and also competed well individually.

She has shown great improvement in skill level over the past year and this showed in her individual results placing fourth on bars, fifth on floor and sixth overall against a field of older gymnasts.

Despite only being 13, Kiera was chosen to represent Wales in the senior event, where she competed on two apparatus as she is returning from an injury.

Kiera did not let this or her age hamper her performance, claiming the bronze medal on beam and placing seventh on bars.

She also gained a team gold as the Welsh senior team added the Celtic Cup senior title to the junior title won earlier.

Morgan and Kiera represented Barry YMCA at the Welsh Championships event. Both gymnasts competed in the Espoir age category for gymnasts aged under-14.

This was the first time that Morgan had competed at this event, but her vibrant personality and determination shone through and she claimed a bronze medal on the vault and placed sixth overall.

She still has another year to compete within the age group.

Kiera again competed on two pieces, the beam and bars. Her natural gymnastic ability, sense of balance and great poise resulted in her becoming the Welsh beam champion.

GB squad member Kiera is also an exceptionally strong gymnast who has a natural sense of rhythm and timing, which showed on the bars where she swung her way to a bronze medal.

Both Kiera and Morgan now train full-time under the guidance of the Welsh Gymnastics and GB Junior National Coach Tracey Skirton.

KAREN DAVIES

Mixed fortunes for Kart star

TOM HARVEY of Bonvilston ably demonstrated his title credentials with stunning form in the second round of the 2010 national Super 1 karting series at Larkhall in Scotland – and it was only a rival's ill-intentions that prevented the highly-rated young south Wales speed demon from coming away again with a deservedly handsome lead in the chase for the crown.

In heat one, he was runner-up. In heat two, it looked as if Tom was going to win.

"I concentrated on keeping it tight, then into the last corner he knocked me straight off.

"I had been on-course for my first-ever Super 1 win, and I was disappointed and angry with what happened at the end."

Tom recovered to finish sixth and in the second final he came third.

'Long rest' for State of Play

by BRIAN LEE

LLANCARFAN'S Evan Williams was full of praise for his *State Of Play*, who finished a gallant third behind *Don't Push It* and *Black Apalachi* in the Grand National.

Evan will now prepare the 10-year-old for a third attempt next year. He said: "He's fine, he's grand, he stayed on well and he ran a very brave race and we're over the moon.

Jockey Paul Moloney said: "It was a serious run from a serious horse and he might win next year, God willing."

State Of Play, who had finished fourth the previous year, is still improving, says Evan, and his Hennessy Gold Cup winner will now have a long rest.

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